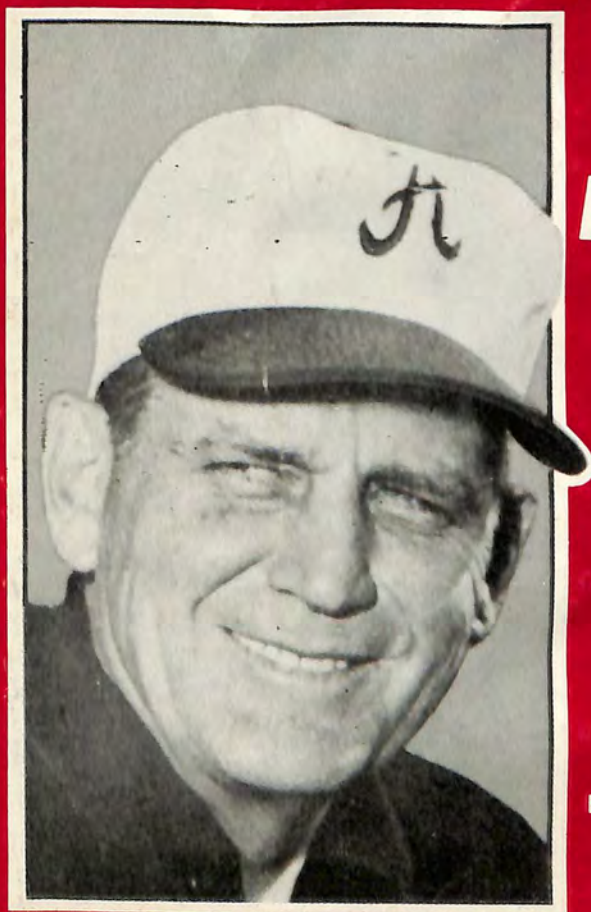


WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING*

*But it beats anything that comes in second

By
**Benny
Marshall**



Classic closeups from
the years that made
Bear Bryant America's
No. 1 football coach

Winning Isn't Everything

BY BENNY MARSHALL

"You may not be the best football coach in the country," Paul Bryant's friend Duffy Daugherty told him once, "but you sure cause the most commotion."

Coach Daugherty of Michigan State said a mouthful.

Football's greatest coach of the sixties also is football's most controversial, and fascinating; sometimes, its most frustrating.

In 1958 Bryant came to the University of Alabama to his finest years. Benny Marshall, sports editor of The Birmingham News, set out then to learn what made this famously fabulous one tick. In "Winning Isn't Everything" he has reached for the inside of Bear Bryant, and found and written from intimate knowledge.

Continued on back flap

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***But it beats anything that comes in second**

By
Benny Marshall

Edited by
Wendell Givens

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To
PAUL WILLIAM BRYANT,

who seldom
comes in second
in anything

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Assistance of the many who have in varied ways encouraged the writing and publication of this book is acknowledged. The author is in greatest debt to The Birmingham News, which made it possible, first, for him as a sports reporter to know such as Paul Bryant; and second, to research News files for much of the material which appears herein.

PREFACE

"I was going to town, to Fordyce. We had 10 little pigs, and daddy gave them to me to sell. If I could get a dollar each, he would let me keep half of it. I couldn't have been more than 10 or 11. We were still living in the bottoms. So I hitched up and started to town, and somewhere the wagon got stuck. Nothing I tried would work. Finally I guess I just sat there and cried. It didn't look like I could do anything. I couldn't sell the pigs. I wouldn't get the money. I must have been there nearly all day. But finally somebody came by, and they got me out of the mud, and I drove on to Fordyce and sold those pigs."—PAUL BRYANT.

• • •

"Things have a way of coming out right for Paul William Bryant, who Saturday night stepped to the place of honor in Chicago to accept the acclamation of his fellowmen in the coaching world. The country boy from Arkansas was Coach of the Year."—BENNY MARSHALL.

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The Call From Home

1. THE CALL FROM HOME

THE temperature must have been 120 in that room, and there was no shade. It was Dec. 3, 1957, in Houston, Tex., a little past 11 o'clock in the morning.

Outside, the day was cold and wet and gray, December at its dreariest. But inside the Shamrock Hotel, monument to the truth that Texans go broke big, too, the bright, hot lights for the television cameras were in place and blazing.

The big man in the gray suit sat and sweated, unsmiling and serious, looking cameras, and microphones and newspapermen in the eye, and they looked back. All of them waited. No one talked. Silence was complete.

Then Ernest Williams, the banker from Tuscaloosa, Ala., who had headed the committee that would find a new football coach for Dr. Frank A. Rose, the new president at the University of Alabama, came from behind the closed door which had sealed off one section of the suite, and said:

"Gentlemen, we have the announcement."

Now, it was official. Paul Bryant, the farm boy from Arkansas who had played end for Frank Thomas, and coached with growing distinction at Maryland and Kentucky and Texas A & M, was coming back to coach Alabama.

This wasn't supposed to be quite a sensation. The subject had been talked and written up and down the great state of Texas, throughout Alabama, over the South as Crimson Tide football limped to the end of three losing years under the unfortunate J. B. Whitworth.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

Later, at least two dozen newspapermen would claim they'd known it first and put it in the paper first.

But right now, at the moment of final truth, Williams' words carried impact that Paul Bryant must have felt, too.

Suddenly, the room was full of sound, and the cameras were firing, and all the questions wanted asking at once. They got it quiet, at last, and Bryant of Alabama stood up to say his piece, short and sweet.

"This is the most difficult thing I ever had to do," he said, and that was aimed, obviously, at placating the Texas Aggie men who were anything but happy over Bryant's departure.

"You don't stay at Texas A & M as long as we did without learning to love it, the tradition, the boys, everything. The reason, the only reason, I'm going back is because my school called me."

An hour after, or maybe a couple, when all the reporters had gone hurrying away to let the world of football know that Bryant had made the move, Bryant was still in the room at the Shamrock off in a corner, and Hank Crisp, the old coach, was with him. They studied a list of high school boys who might play football at Alabama. . . .

For Paul Bryant, the best years, the prime years, the most eventful years of a lifetime had begun. These would be years that cheered, and years that laughed, and years that cried, too, the next seven, the big seven. They would bring two national football championships (1961 and 1964) and they would put Alabama back in the bowl games (an unbroken run from 1959 through January 1965 and the first night game in the Orange Bowl).

They would bring personal success like nothing he had known, not even as a big and winning man at Maryland, Kentucky and Texas A & M.

THE CALL FROM HOME

He met with a president of the United States, and he was Coach of the Year in 1961. Arkansas, state of his birth, made a place for him in its Hall of Fame, honor roll of most distinguished citizens.

Adulation and acclaim and applause unending were his at the University of Alabama. Alabama men had waited long to bring him back. They were not disappointed.

The stadium grew, and there was a new dormitory for athletes to be called Paul Bryant Hall.

Alabama football was great again in the land, like it had been in the time of Frank Thomas and Wallace Wade. Paul Bryant walked tall out front, a man dedicated to the proposition that work and pride and sacrifice would win football games.

Other universities hurried to hire his assistants, and the Bryant influence over college football became, in these seven years, greater than any other man's. He towered over his profession, a coach for remembering like Rockne, Warner, Thomas and Neyland.

It was also in this time that the Darwin Holt-Chick Graning incident came about, a Tech halfback hurt by an Alabama linebacker, so blown out of proportion that it was a factor in the final breaking off in 1964 of Alabama-Tech relations.

It was in this time that national magazines found Bryant a big enough target to hit, and the weapon they chose was "brutality."

Bryant taught his football players to play too hard was the way that one came out, and it penetrated a hide which was tough, but how tough can you get?

Saturday Evening Post, aiming a twin blow at Bryant and at Wallace Butts, printed an impossible story which

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

said that the two had "fixed" an Alabama-Georgia football game, and that ended with Bryant \$300,000 richer when Curtis Publishing Co. settled out of court. There was no way to pay him, ever, for the personal anguish and for the tears of his family, but he knew now where his friends were. He knew for certain.

It was Duffy Daugherty, the round Irishman with the laughing face who once told Bryant, "You may not be the best coach in the world, Paul, but you sure cause the most commotion."

Daugherty told it right, and Bryant's years—the big seven—made a million words for many a typewriter following after the Crimson Tide in all its winning.

But the story never is all there, in a football stadium, or on a practice field.

There was a Bryant story to be written which attempted to look closer at a man marked for immortality in the world of games.

That story came in a thousand pieces, a little here and a little there. It was to be gathered late at night, riding toward somewhere, or in the quiet of very early in the morning, away from the applause, hidden from the tumult.

Every man is many men, and Bryant the football coach is no exception. It is a rare experience when he opens the door and invites a friend in to know him.

That is what I have attempted to do, privileged by The Birmingham News to follow close on the trail through the big seven years.

Most of the material on the pages following came from The News.

I was there that Tuesday in December in Texas when the big seven began, and it is probable that standing close to every high point, being there for the low ones,

THE CALL FROM HOME

I learned some things all of his friends and those who aren't his friends, couldn't know.

They needed writing to be part of the record of a man who is a very big man. They needed saving.

These were years marked unforgettable. For Bear Bryant. For a reporter.

2. FAMILIAR GROUND

THE DAY was out of the book on March, windy; on a college campus where the green starts to whisper things about spring. A day of ordinary appearance at the University of Alabama.

But it was more than it seemed to be, this March 19, year of 1958.

Paul Bryant was out of bed at 5:30 as is his way. Like the other early-birds, he could say to himself, "The nights are getting shorter" when the pale first light came to Tuscaloosa, Ala.

It was getting good day by the time he came to his office at 6:15 and started talking into the machine which saves letter-words for later-rising secretaries.

At 8 o'clock he met with Jerry Claiborne, Carney Laslie, Phil Cutchin, Sam Bailey and the rest of the men on his University of Alabama football-coaching staff.

At 10:30 he was back at his desk; at noon, he lunched. At 1:30 he stood before all his young people, players and coaches alike, and said what he had to say. "That's between them and me," he told an inquisitive visitor who inquired about the little talk. "That's never for publication."

When he walked away from the Friedman Hall meeting place, it was toward a dressing room. At 2:45 in the afternoon of March 19, he long-legged it through the gates and out onto the football place that bears the name, "Denny Field," one of the monuments to Dr. Mike Denny, an educator who knew what a football team can do for

a university. Here is a rallying point, a potent place in campus life if it's a successful football team.

Alabama sent for success renewed when it sent for Bryant. So here he was, with one of Happy Campbell's baseball hats upon his head, and a large "A" for Alabama thereon. And officially, finally, completely, the man thousands of Alabama men wanted was on the job.

"Yep," he said, "I remember it. We practiced in this same place. We'd work over here when it rained and back down there when Coach Thomas wanted to get away from anybody scouting along the fences.

"I remember, once, in 1937 when I was coaching . . ." The story never got told. For here was a gentleman who remembered years before when Paul Bryant of Fordyce, Ark., first came to the place. And he'd seen him and knew him and wanted to shake his hand.

The coach of the Crimson Tide paused as a courteous man would and shook that hand. He had a minute or so to talk of long ago, then he had to move along his way, but he remembered as he went.

"There's not a spot of ground out there that doesn't have a little of my blood on it. And not many places where Coach (Red) Drew (who was his end teacher) hasn't let me have it, and not nearly as strong as he should have, probably."

Bryant grinned at the memory, had a glance at the photographers and the spectators growing in number, waiting for the athletes to appear, and maybe he was a little impatient, too.

Then they came, in red and white and green and orange, the Crimson Tidesmen of 1958, big and looking happy and needing to learn some lessons, and wanting to, it was presumed.

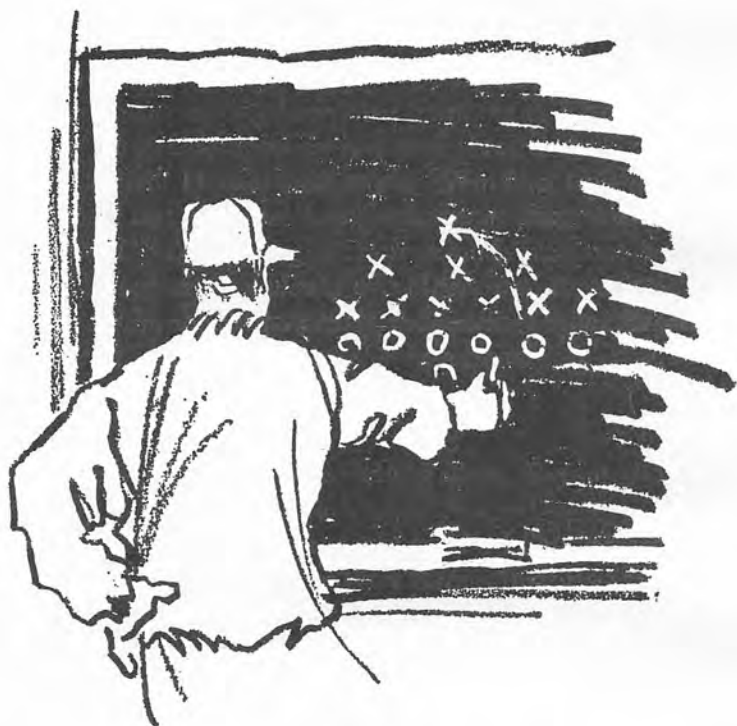
All the talk was done. Paul Bryant, Alabama coach

FAMILIAR GROUND

who once was an Alabama football player, went to join them after a long, long time.

And this windy day in March, this day just in front of spring, could not be considered ordinary for him, for those who would work and play for him, for those who watched. It was a day, a time to be remembered many years from now, a feeling that now everything would be better right away, real soon, because this was a place where Bryant's game wanted to be big.

Ordinary? Hardly. The man who came to work had been described as many kinds of a man, but ordinary would never fit, and most of all, this was his day, windy March 19, 1958.



Coach and Teacher

3. ROOM FOR WORRY

Unless assistant coaches or players are there, the door is always open. Good manners dictate that you rap lightly on any piece of wood that's handy, and then the big voice bids you enter, and here is where it all begins for University of Alabama football . . . in the office of the head coach, rebuilt, refurnished and occupied since 1958 by a fellow named Bryant. Here it's always strictly business, and there isn't a great amount of laughing. Here, too, is the worrying place. The game for worrying-about this day in September of 1964 ended Alabama 31, Georgia 3. No one will ever accuse Paul Bryant of over-confidence in the matter of football games yet to be played.

THE time for small jokes between friends had gone away. Paul Bryant's face was stern and serious. Now a football game was to be played, and this is stern, and this is serious with the coach of Alabama's football team. It's that big. It's living.

Bryant sat at his desk which faces across the big room to the long table where assistant coaches gather as at a board of directors meeting, on to the blackboard, wall-to-wall, behind.

He poked through the pile of papers which is always there, looking for a cigaret, and a light, and there was no rush for him to examine what he'd say to the newspaperman who waited, like this in 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961,

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1962, 1963. And now it was 1964, week of the game with Georgia.

Paul Bryant sat at the desk in 1958, and he said what he was going to do, and he did it, not accidentally.

In this carpeted room with the pictures of the bowl teams marching around the walls, he announced in 1959 that Alabama would try the Liberty Bowl, that Alabama was back in post-season football business.

He talked about Pat Trammell here, and Scooter Dyess and Lee Roy Jordan, Tommy Brooker, Billy Neighbors, a hundred college boys playing football.

There's a couch over against one wall and a rumpled pillow is the evidence that he tried to take a nap. There have been nights, sleepless, in troubled times when he came here and stayed all through the long hours, alone, because he is a man who does not insist that his travail be shared. It's his.

On the wall, above, are pictures of Hank Crisp and Frank Thomas. They brought Paul Bryant the boy out of Arkansas and they helped in the shaping of Paul Bryant the man. He will not forget.

He sat and he pulled at the cigaret, deep, and was silent thinking.

There was the day he slammed a paper against the desk, sorrowful and angry, and he asked, "Why, why?" Then he said, "Who will speak up for Darwin Holt if I don't speak up? Darwin Holt is my boy. I look out for Darwin Holt." And he did.

"I sent the play in. I called it," he said, and that was 1962 when the pass backfired that let Georgia Tech in, 7 to 6 and it wasn't about to be Jack Hurlbut's fault, or that of the boy who jumped high and deflected the ball away from a receiver clear, or Joe Namath who'd gotten

ROOM FOR WORRY

up from a crushing tackle by Ted Davis and played on as best he could.

It was 1962. "I'm not doing justice to these boys, or to the University of Alabama. I ought to get out! I ought to quit! I will."

A thousand days, a thousand stories, some of them for the paper, some of them not. And now it was 1964, and here was Georgia.

Bryant squashed the cigaret leaving a wisp of smoke curling up, hunting the ceiling.

"I've been a senior football player, too," he said. I know it's awfully easy to say to yourself when the time comes I'll be ready.

"You better be ready BEFORE the time comes. We aren't ready. You look at them yourself this afternoon. You'll see. We just aren't ready to play Georgia, or anybody. If I was a picker, one of those experts, I might pick Georgia to win. You'd really have something to brag about if that's what happened, wouldn't you? It could happen."

He frowned when he was reminded. "You said it last year and the year before and the year before that. People say you don't mean it, they say 'It's just old Bear. Listen to him. He's getting those boys up.'"

The frown was deeper. "Is that all it is? Is this just Paul Bryant coaching? Part of the method?"

"You're doggone right it's Paul Bryant coaching," he said and his voice rose. "But what I've said to you, don't think I haven't said a lot more of to that football team. I hope these boys will wake up. I think they will. But if they don't, we're in trouble.

"Come on. I'll buy a cup of coffee." This, too, from 1958, 1959, and all the years.

Out the door, across the street beginning to be busy with freshman traffic. It's just a little way down to Jimmy

Harrison's drug store. You walk. The eyes of the new kids coming by widen in startled recognition. The heads swing around. There he is. If Coach Bryant is aware he gives no sign. They will write home about it.

He walks, not slowly nor swiftly, adjusting his pace to his companion's and he thinks about Georgia, I think, and the Saturday night football game. It is, as the hour draws closer, an all-consuming thing. There is no halfway approach for Bryant. No easy way.

"I wish I was one of those guys who could get up Saturday morning and go fishing," he said. "I think it would be nice to be like that, but I'm not. I don't suppose I ever would be."

A door had been opened, and a question wanted asking.

"How long do you go on like this? How long does it last? How long do you last?" and it's a thought born of firsthand knowledge of long days and fierce activity on a practice field and nights that don't end if there is a game to be played.

"Why, I guess I hope it lasts forever," Paul Bryant said. "Do you think I could change myself, that I could be any different if I quit this and did something else? I suppose you want to win at anything, writing a column, maybe."

"Some do," he was told, "some don't."

"It's that way with football coaches, too," he said softly, and we turned and went inside where the coffee was, and talked some more about who was hurt and how Georgia might play, and what the Georgia tackles could do rushing a passer.

Then out again, back across the campus coming alive now under the trees which keep the green of summer-time, echoing the laughter of the young ones passing by. I don't think Paul Bryant heard them at all. He had

ROOM FOR WORRY

a meeting with the players to go to, and he'd tell them again, "Wake up! Be proud."

Then he went back to his office alone and stretched out on the couch underneath the pictures of Frank Thomas and Hank Crisp, but Bryant didn't sleep. The game the boys were to play Saturday night in Denny Stadium was too big now. Maybe next year he'd take it easy.

4. NO SECOND FIDDLES

The ambition came early, and it never went away. Paul Bryant, football player, Paul Bryant, football coach, was aiming from the beginning at high places. The slogan lettered in red and framed on Bryant's office wall at Alabama reads: "Winning isn't everything, but it sure beats anything that comes in second." The young Bryant would have no truck with second; nor would the older Bryant. Men who knew him when delight in recounting "Bear Bryant Stories." Here's one of the hundreds.

NORMAN COOPER was telling Bear Bryant stories very early in the morning.

Another day and Cooper might tell Red Sanders stories or Gaynell Tinsley stories or Billy Bancroft stories. Before he became Norman Cooper, who sells road machinery, he was Shorty Cooper who made Little All-American center at Howard, later a good pro, and was Coach Cooper at Vanderbilt, Kansas, LSU, all around.

Travelling so, a man picks up good material and the output can be varied.

But the subject had got to be Bryant early this morning, and it was early in the morning because you come on Cooper at the strangest times. He never got over his farm-boy raising. When the sun comes up, it's time to be moving.

"It was when we were coaching together at Vanderbilt for Red Sanders," Cooper said, "I remember it just as

well. We were sitting around talking this day, about football coaching, and that Bryant told me: 'Slim, assistant coaching is for the birds. I'm gonna be a head coach, my own boss, or I'm not gonna be a coach.'

"You know as well as I do, when that guy makes up his mind, it's made up. He was going to be a head coach. He meant it.

"Back then, there was some scouting for pro teams by college assistants. Maybe you could pick up four or five hundred bucks a season. And the first thing I knew, Bryant was scouting for the Redskins. He'd go to Washington every now and then.

"You might have known he'd get to be friends with George Preston Marshall, and when that Maryland job was open right after the war, and Bryant was home from the Navy, George Marshall was the man who sent them after him. And he never was an assistant coach any more."

Cooper detailed this in support of a theory of his, which is that one of the reasons Bryant succeeds is because he never takes his eyes off an objective, once it's established. I have a feeling that Bear's old assistant coaching buddy at Vanderbilt, who starred for Howard that day in 1935 when the Bulldogs tied the Alabama team Bryant played end for, figures correctly here.

"Another thing," Cooper kept talking while the 5:15-in-the-morning cup of coffee cooled, "Bryant was establishing a trend, back then, in 1945.

"He has set a lot of 'em, coaching, but unless I miss my guess, when he took the Maryland job, he was about the only young head coach anybody had ever hired. They all looked for somebody 45 years old. I think Bear was 29.

"When he started showing folks what a young guy could do, it started a lot of people thinking. Now, nobody

wants to go to a middle-aged head coach. They want young ones, like Vince Dooley, or Darrell Royal, Frank Broyles, like that one (Terry Brennan) at Notre Dame."

You could say Cooper was right about that, too, though he missed the age. In 1945 when Paul Bryant went to Maryland, he was 32 years old, and that's just a boy, all contemporaries of his, mine and Cooper's will agree. A kid of a boy, as they'd say back in Rogersville, Ala., or, for that matter, Fordyce, Ark., where Bryant came from.

When Cooper comes back, I'll tell him my Bear Bryant story. (A fellow named Bill Dickey, who won fame in another sport, fills in more details much later in this volume.)

The 1941 football season had ended, and you'd suspect that the hand of Frank Thomas was involved, for Paul Bryant of the Vanderbilt staff had an invitation to go see about a head-coaching job closer to home than Maryland by many a mile.

They wanted to talk to him at Arkansas, and Bryant—only 27 years old—went wheeling out there. There were interviews. Recommendations were studied. "The job is yours," they told the young coach. He was driving back home, and he had to be proud. He wanted to be a head football coach. The game that had taken him from Fordyce to the University of Alabama was his life, and he sought no other. Here it was, in his hands.

The day was Dec. 7, 1941. In the early afternoon, the voices on the radios took on fearful urgency. Remember? A man in an automobile on the highway could hear the sadness and know the anger. Japanese bombs had blasted Pearl Harbor.

Back home, Paul Bryant kissed his young wife hello, packed a bag and kissed her goodbye. The next day he

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was in Washington, and in a little while he was in the U. S. Navy. Somebody else could be coach at Arkansas.

There had been a change in objectives. It was four years later when Paul Bryant got back on the other road, the one which led him, finally, home to the University of Alabama.

5. FOREVER "COACH"

The former players gathered together at Tuscaloosa for a football coaching clinic all their own are busy with reminiscences and such. The room is noisy. Then suddenly they snap to attention, schoolboys again, for Paul Bryant, "Coach" forever to them, has walked in. On this June morning he reached deep to impart some wisdom from all his years to men who respected and who believed. It was a lesson none of them would be likely to forget, and all of them wrote it down, and each of them went away confident he'd do better for having listened. Bryant was teacher, stern and commanding, that morning. That night they gathered at his home and talked until dawn, and this, too, they would remember.

IF you get to bed by 2:30 in the morning, you do it only with the greatest of self-discipline," said Phil Cutchin, head coach of Oklahoma State University. He was sleepy, but laughing. "Nobody wants to quit talking."

For two days, they'd done a lot of it at the most exclusive football coaching clinic in the world, this being the gathering of the Paul Bryant clan, with pretty wives and small children included. You've got a ticket if you played football for Bryant.

Now on Saturday morning, husbands and fathers and football coaches had come to the *pièce de résistance* at the Stafford Hotel.

The showing of the Sugar Bowl film wherein Tim Davis

keeps on kicking field goals and Alabama continues to beat Ole Miss was only a bright preliminary in color, though it still bothers Jim Blevins who had the projector duty. "I still get scared every time I see that fourth quarter," Blevins said.

Charlie McClendon, successful head coach at Louisiana State University, got his notebook out and his pen. Walt Yowarsky of the Minnesota Vikings hitched his chair forward. Cutchin of Oklahoma State, Jerry Claiborne of Virginia Tech, Bud Moore of Kentucky, Don Watson of South Carolina, Jack Rutledge of Demopolis, Ala., and 50 others waited.

It was Bryant's turn on the program, and this, more than anything, was what they'd come for, the boys who played football for him at Kentucky, Texas A & M and Alabama—grown older, fatter, balder—and boys no more, though they will call Paul Bryant "Coach" forever, most respectfully.

"I have made a jillion mistakes since I began coaching," Bryant said. "I'm going to tell you about some of them, and it's my hope that you can avoid them. I hope I don't bore you."

He didn't. For the hour and a half that followed on Saturday morning Alabama's coach offered more insight into his approach to football than you'd gather from the sidelines in years of watching his team play. Saturday morning, Bryant was still teaching. Many were happy to learn some more.

He wrote a book once, with Gene Stallings' assistance, called "Championship Football." Saturday morning's dissertation would have been an excellent addition. Nineteen years of head-coaching produced this counsel. Hear it.

"Never compromise with what you think is right. I believe our 1961 team here and our 1956 team at Texas

FOREVER "COACH"

A & M believed that the way I wanted it done would win. I don't say they thought it was the easiest, or the smartest, but they believed it and they won.

"Find your own picture, your own self in anything that goes bad. It's awfully easy to mouth off at your staff or chew out players, but if it's bad, and you're the head coach, you're responsible. If we have an intercepted pass, I threw it. I'm the head coach. If we get a punt blocked, I caused it. A bad practice, a bad game, it's up to the head coach to assume his responsibility.

"Don't ever give up on ability. Don't give up on a player who has it.

"Learn to recognize winners, Pat Trammell didn't do anything well except win. Steve Sloan proved at New Orleans that he's a winner.

"Don't over-work your squad. If you're going to make a mistake, under-work them. There was five weeks with our '61 team we went without pads on. It went on until Trammell and Billy Neighbors came to me and said, 'Let's hit.' I beat my Kentucky team in the Orange Bowl. If we had played Santa Clara the first day we got to Florida, there's no doubt in my mind we would have won.

"Next season the guys I know are going to play—I'm not talking about fourth-string guards—are going to come back here in shape and work like it was mid-season.

"Don't give up before the game starts. I lost a Kentucky game with Georgia in 1946 simply because I didn't believe we could win.

"If you're caught with a weak team, don't try to get fancy and please the spectators. The weaker you are, the more conservatively you must play. You play that way and you might win. At least you'll be respectable.

"Don't lose your game at the half. Concentrate on

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winning in the second half. Don't waste time on stuff that can't help you.

"If you start to make a decision, go ahead and make it. Don't mealy-mouth around.

"Don't ruin a practice by not disciplining yourself. If you're upset, don't take it out on your team.

"Make sure you don't kill your team off early. Have your 'studs,' if you've got any, ready when you need them. Rest that great football player some.

"Don't over-coach them. Let them play some. If you're out there coaching them all the time, when are they going to practice?"

"Don't do a lot of coaching just before the game. If you haven't coached them by 14 minutes to two on Saturday, it's too late then.

"Don't change your game plan unless you have to. Certainly, you've got to have a plan that's flexible. Don't change when it isn't necessary.

"Don't count on beating anybody on a sure tip or a tip-off . . . like the quarterback's feet.

"Don't talk too much. Don't pop off. Don't talk after the game until you cool off."

There was a Frank Howard story, and another about the time Bryant took a Kentucky team to the stadium an hour early, and then it was time for visiting—and talking—to begin again.

Saturday night, no one was slowing down, or doubting that the Bryant Way of Winning still will prevail when autumn finds them at a hundred other places, sights on the goal which do not change, bound together by the man who taught them first.

"Lookie there," Bryant grinned Saturday morning as a pretty young wife brought her small son in for breakfast.

FOREVER "COACH"

"You've got to say all these guys out-married themselves. That's another lesson they learned from the old man."

Mrs. Paul Bryant could take her bow Saturday evening when they all came to her house for a party before going back home to win at least 10 in a row.

6. MOST GOOD ONES GO

Bud Wilkinson, who won more than anyone when he was coaching at Oklahoma, has a theory about assistant coaches. "If you hire the right kind," Wilkinson says, "you've got to keep losing them. A good staff produces a constant turnover." Since 1958 Paul Bryant men have been packing up and leaving for bigger things every year. None was closer to him than Gene Stallings, who played at Texas A & M and did all his coaching under Bryant. But "goodbye" was inevitable and the goodbyes of a lifetime take a man back to the starting places sometimes. So, here . . .

YOUNG Gene Stallings was approaching a speed record of some sort in his switch from Alabama assistant-coaching to Texas A & M head-coaching.

The Aggies called Stallings late on a Sunday. Monday morning they came and flew him from Tuscaloosa to Texas. Monday afternoon at 4, he was Aggie chief. Presto, chango, good-bye Alabama, hello Lone Ranger.

Only young coach I know of who might have done it more swiftly is the somewhat older coach who taught Gene Stallings in college, brought him up on the Crimson Tide staff and sent him on his way.

That brings up a story. Paul Bryant was looking back that day over a head-coaching career which has brought him every kind of success a man might want. He had forgotten right now for a little while, and whoever it

was the Alabama football team would be beating on Saturday.

"I've been lucky," Bryant said (and that's exactly what he said, for I wrote it down as he said it).

"I've sure had my share of it, and I had a lot in the beginning getting my first head-coaching job.

"This was 1945. The war was over, I was eligible to get out of service, and I had an opportunity to come back here to Alabama as an assistant or go to Georgia Tech as an assistant.

"I went out to the All-Star game with Killer Kain and Francis Stann, who was in the Navy with me and still is a sportswriter in Washington and we went to see Green Bay play the All-Stars.

"You know that party The Chicago Tribune gives the night before the game; I was there, but it was so noisy that Don Hutson and George Marshall and I left and went out on the mezzanine. We were just sitting out there talking.

"George offered me a job as an assistant with the Redskins, but I told him I didn't think so.

"What do you want, a head-coaching job?" he asked me, and when I said yes, he told me, 'Wait a minute.'

"He went away and when he came back, he said, 'Get over to your room and get a phone call.' I didn't know what to think, but he was so positive about it, I went. And I was turning my key in the door when I heard the phone ringing.

"I answered it, and it was Curley Byrd, the president of Maryland. 'Are you interested in coming here as head coach?' he asked me.

"Yes, sir! I told him.

"All right,' he said, 'Why don't you come and see me?'

"I said, 'Well, the game's tomorrow night, I'll come over to Maryland Saturday if that's all right.'

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"He said, 'If you want to see me, I'll expect you at 8 o'clock in the morning.'

"I got there at 8 o'clock in the morning, the next morning, and that was it."

What "it" was was a coaching assignment Bryant filled for one year. Then he moved on to Kentucky. There it was Texas A & M and, finally in 1958, back to Alabama to stay, and to prepare assistants like Gene Stallings in a way which would have them ready, too, if a hurry-up call came as it did from College Station, Tex., to Tuscaloosa.

It has been noted that Bryant has graduated assistants to head jobs with great frequency since 1958. The run on his staff must top anything ever in football.

"Don't you object sometime?" he was asked, and he answered, "No, never, I was an assistant once.

"I hate to lose them, but I've got to think every time one of ours gets a job, it's for us all and it helps us all.

"I couldn't be selfish enough to resent it, and I think all of my assistants know that I try to help them, and let me tell you, Beebs Stallings won't be the last one."

Knowledge in coaching circles of this fact makes it much easier, I'd think, for Bryant to bring in top-flight help for there always is the great promise of the green fields over yonder.

What Bryant does, I suspect, is coach his coaches. The pupils profit.

7. SATURDAY MORNING

I asked him, "What will you do all day, the day of the game?" And Paul Bryant answered, "Why don't you come and see?" It was a November Saturday, season of 1964, Louisiana State to be played and opportunity without precedent. Who wouldn't "go and see"? Low key is the way Alabama's coach kept it; no rah-rah, no exhorting of young men to do-or-die for alma mater, but from dawn until kickoff, standing by, you felt the urgency building in them, and when finally the time came to write of the game itself, the product of all the preparation—and the waiting—Alabama had won again. The system is calm, without hysteria, and very good.

THE eighth Saturday in the 20th head-coaching year in the football life of Paul William Bryant began, like the first, very early in the morning. Bryant couldn't sleep. It was 4:30, and the skies still had stars in them, when the big man eased out of bed, went to the window, pushed the curtain back, and looked to see what Nov. 7, 1964, had brought to Birmingham.

He went back to bed, and still he couldn't sleep, and at 6:30 he was up for good, walking softly around the room so that his wife might sleep, but she was awake, too, and they waited together as the day of the Louisiana State game at Legion Field was born.

Nothing desperate about it, Alabama's coach insisted. "Just a strange bed," he said, "I sleep lots better at home."

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Howard Schnellenberger was out early, too, and Bryant met him as he went for first coffee, and they talked a little while about offense. Then Ken Donahue was by, and they talked about defense, and there was a morning paper to be read.

The day was slow getting on its feet, and Mary Harmon Bryant didn't want to wait with it. "She's gone to see the grandbabies," her husband reported at 8, and then he settled down with the wide-paged pad and pen, and this was business. This was his job. It didn't want disturbing.

"Just jotting down a few things," he said a half-hour later, "some things I didn't want to forget. Two or three plays, like that, and I had to finish up this list. Personnel. Who goes in when and where.

"Let's go for a walk," and there wasn't much to be said, so no one said anything until the two small boys spotted the tall figure in the black trousers, and checked gray sport coat, the tie with the red stripes, ambling aimlessly.

"Good morning, gentlemen," Bryant said, and extended a hand for shaking, then signed autographs and continued on his way.

"No," he answered a question. "It's not the same as it was 20 years ago. I get up for a game, sure, and I'm that way, right now, but there was a time when I'd be sick at my stomach every morning. I was sick this morning, as a matter of fact, but it's not the same."

And it couldn't be the same, actually. The Bryant of 20 years ago had things to prove. The Bryant who couldn't sleep Saturday morning, who got up early and walked, has proved them all.

The boys in the red jackets were coming from their rooms at the motel as the clock headed on toward 10, Saturday of the game. Jim Goostree, the trainer, stood

between the tables, "I'll ask Mike Hopper to return thanks," he said, and Hopper and his buddies and his coach stood, heads bowed, for the prayer.

Then they were demolishing steaks, for this was the last they'd eat until dinner after LSU, and that would be back home. Bryant ate, too, with as much relish as his young friends, and when he stood, chairs scraped as the Crimson Tide came to attention.

"There are several reminders," he said, "and they aren't offered in any particular order." His voice was low, a teacher reviewing lessons, matter-of-factly, reasonably. It came out, "If they do this . . . if we do that . . . kickoffs, punt returns, defenses, offenses," and his audience gave attention undivided.

"I think you know what to do," he said, half an hour later. "I think you are capable of doing it. Remember, do your job for just six seconds, every play, and make something happen. Don't wait for it to happen. Make it happen. Do that, and we're going to win."

"If we get a bad break," he shrugged, "so what? Then we'll get a good one. If we get behind, if we get way behind, that doesn't change it. Just give six seconds, every play.

"Now, I want to go for a walk with the quarterbacks."

Joe Namath, Steve Sloan, Wayne Trimble and Buddy French left with their coach, young men charged with the utmost in responsibility. Another half hour and they were back, and Schnellenberger, Donahue, Ken Meyer, Gene Stallings and Carney Laslie gathered with the boss for their last meeting on LSU.

"This is how the personnel will be," Bryant told them, and went down his list, even unto the fourth position, and when he'd done, he asked, "Am I wrong, somewhere?" They talked some more, and then there was a change

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suggested, mulled over, and then another, and the meeting broke up laughing.

"Charlie (McClendon) and Pat (James) will never believe I've got the guts to do that," he said, and the signal for dismissal was, "I've got to get some stomach medicine, men. Suppose I am losing my guts?" No one supposed so.

From the bathroom issued the sound of an uncertain baritone raised in song. "Love lifted me, dah-de-dah-de-dah," Paul Bryant sang, and Billy Neighbors would know that meant trouble for someone.

At 11:30, Ben Benjamin and Jack Baldwin of the Orange Bowl came calling for some reason or other. They left at 11:50 and Bryant clapped his hat on his head, pulled his raincoat on and went after them toward the buses waiting, loaded with football players.

"It's a dog-goned shame," he said, "I mean the weather. The biggest crowd we ever had, and get a day like this."

"Wait," to a passenger climbing on the bus with him. "You sit over there, I'm a little superstitious."

Now, Handy Ellis' motorcycle was screaming out ahead and Joe Smelley's highway patrol people were swinging into line, leading the way through the traffic thickening as the rain kept coming and the highway glistened.

Bryant sat, silently, front seat on the right. He clapped his hands together once, muttered a complaint to himself about a traffic snarl. The players' voices were low, muted. Someone laughed nervously.

The coach looked at Tank Mitchell, small guard. "Don't let one of those big boys fall on you, Tank," he said, and there were several laughs.

Then silence again, in the bus. A man outside, carrying a small boy on his shoulders, spotted the entourage and knew who was there. "Yay, yay, Bama" he yelled, and

now "Roll, Tide. . . . Go get 'em, men" as the bus neared the stadium and the thousands gathering there.

They swung into the parking lot, past all the up-raised, happy, curious faces. Somebody screamed. "Tiger meat!" No one responded.

Then they were filing off, one by one, and the last man off the bus was Bryant. Through the dressing room, out onto the field for a walk around. "Enough rain already to make the ball slick," Bryant grunted to himself, and walked along. The crowd saw him and saluted. "Hey, Bear." "Get'em, Bear." Slowly, around the field, and the sun had come out to salute the Crimson Tide.

"In the dressing room? We'll just sit and be quiet. Nothing more to say now. If we haven't done it now, it's too late." Bryant answered another question. "They're mighty big. I worry about them just blasting us out of there. Those boys (pointing to the young ones filing off the field to go in and put on the suits and the red shirts) look like a high school team beside LSU."

He looked after them fondly, turned and studied the vast stadium filling fast with the greatest throng ever gathered to see a football game in Alabama, then turned and walked after them.

It was 1 o'clock on the eighth Saturday in the 20th head-coaching year in the football life of Paul Bryant.

Bryant went to it quietly, matter-of-factly, a veteran at work, and such tensions as now might clutch him were hidden inside, deep, not to be seen or told.

Poker-faced Paul Bryant went toward another autumn date with destiny, another Saturday grown tremendous.

"Good luck," a man said. "Go get them."

"Thank you," Paul Bryant said, "We'll try."

And in a little while it was 2 o'clock, and Legion Field exploded.



Point of Honor

8. EXPERT WITNESSES

Paul Bryant's kind of football, a type that won and won and won, had been the subject of a magazine blast in 1962, and it seemed that somewhere there might be an answer. There was; the men who had learned college football under Bryant. They gathered. They talked. And they didn't look like brutes, nor talk like brutes, and they answered better than anyone else this which had been written about a man they admired and respected, and knew better than anyone. Most of them were not stars. Some had missed completely. But they knew. They wanted to talk; I listened.

WHY don't they ever ask the boys who play for him? We could tell them."

That was Billy Neighbors' angry reaction to one of the number of writing men who've attempted to define Paul Bryant and his football coaching.

The trouble with them, as that All-America tackle was pointing out, is that they don't know the subject.

Marlin Dyess knows it. He was a 145-pound halfback, later an engineer in the space program.

Billy Richardson is familiar with Paul Bryant and Alabama football. He played halfback. He became a Madison Avenue type with a securities and investment outfit in Birmingham.

Pat Trammell quarterbacked a national champion

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Crimson Tide. He's in medicine now. So's Gary Phillips, who played tackle at 185 and less.

Leon Fuller, who never weighed more than 170 when he was a Tide backfielder, stayed for post-graduate work at the University. Curtis Crenshaw, who was an end, followed suit.

Bobby Jackson, quarterback on Bryant's first Alabama team in 1958, became a pro. He returned to graduate. Buford Shirley never got to play because he was always hurt. But he stayed to study.

Automobile accident injuries shelved Maurice Dabbs. He never made it as a Tidesman; later sold cars.

Jim Blevins, captain of the 1959 team at Alabama, became a high school coach, then a Bryant assistant, then a head coach at Jacksonville State.

These are products of the Paul Bryant "School of Football Brutality," given prominence by people who don't know.

One week we sat down together, at my request, and examined the situation something like Neighbors wanted it examined a year earlier.

It was a little bit like homecoming, for some of these college teammates hadn't been together for a while.

They laughed a lot at shared memories like the time Norbie Ronsonet scored the touchdown at Mississippi State and they couldn't get him back in the huddle for the extra point because he was running up and down the end zone celebrating.

And Jackson could grin at Trammell, "I stayed at Alabama an extra year just to teach you everything you know. That was a real sacrifice. If it hadn't been for me you'd have been a third-string guard."

There was much of, "Remember that time. . . ."

Then the meeting was called to order. The football

players had the floor to say whatever they wished to say on the subject of collegiate brutality in general, the Bryant brand in particular.

They didn't look brutal. Most of them didn't look like football players, even.

They didn't sound brutal. They sounded like intelligent young men who knew whereof they spoke.

This is what they had to say. Conversation flowed.

DYESS—I think the main reason for Coach Bryant's success is organization. I don't know as he's ever said so much as one cross word to me.

JACKSON—I had it a lot rougher in high school than I ever did at Alabama. My high school coach believed in hitting people. I respect that coach.

RICHARDSON—Hard-nosed football, or whatever you want to call it, didn't start last year.

BLEVINS—I remember my high school coach. He was a great disciplinarian. Coach Bryant is that. He teaches you that you have to sacrifice.

FULLER—The only time Coach Bryant ever got tough on the field was with an individual not doing all he could. It's not lack of ability, that gets him. It's lack of effort.

JACKSON—The first year Coach Bryant came, we didn't think we could beat anybody. When he came, we knew we could. I'm glad I was on his first team. It wasn't all peaches and cream. It was tough. But we got ourselves in good condition and we went out to win.

CRENSHAW—I don't believe I would have played football any place else. Coach Bryant has taken a lot of boys like this and won.

DYESS—You read things about sportsmanship. There's not a one in here who can't tell you the lessons Coach Bryant taught. Turn away from a fight, he'd say. That

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takes a man. I don't know how many he's snatched out of a game for doing something wrong.

BLEVINS—You remember that Georgia game in 1958? I did a bush league thing, but the officials didn't take me out. Coach Bryant did. I'm not going to say he's not tough. He is.

TRAMMELL—Coach Bryant brutal? He must not have been too brutal. Jackson and Phillips played. Actually, he's hard on people who play dirty football. He doesn't like penalties.

CRENSHAW—Nobody wants to hurt a guy. Sure Holt intended to hit Graning, but he didn't want to hurt him. You know that other players are people just like you are.

DABBS—Football is like life. You've got to be aggressive. If I'm not aggressive, I don't sell any automobiles.

SHIRLEY—The best thing I learned from Coach Bryant was a tough mental attitude, the willingness to face a problem and not back down.

RICHARDSON—He told us as freshmen, it's going to be hard. Football is hard. But if you'll stick with me, he said, the lessons you learn will leave you able to confront any problem and go on.

SHIRLEY—If anything, he was too soft on me.

TRAMMELL—I'd be willing to bet that football at Alabama is no tougher than any place else.

PHILLIPS—The main thing Coach Bryant does he shows you that you've got to have a goal, and you put everything into it to reach that goal.

RICHARDSON—I doubt that a boy at Georgia Tech would stay at Alabama. They wouldn't be willing to pay the price.

FULLER—Maybe no one has asked them to pay the price.

EXPERT WITNESSES

TRAMMELL—Isn't football a contact game? If you want to play volleyball, play volleyball, not football.

JACKSON—No coach can make a boy hit if he doesn't want to.

TRAMMELL, laughing—You're a good example of that, Jackson.

JACKSON—Has anybody at Alabama killed anybody? I'll tell you something else, I don't know how I stayed in school the first three years. Lose on the football field, lose in the classroom. But then I got a chance to graduate. Coach Bryant did that for me.

TRAMMELL—Wasn't it your senior year, Gary, that the football squad had the highest scholastic average of any men's organization?

PHILLIPS—Two years, we did. Football's rough. After you get outside it's rough, too. There's a difference between being tough and being dirty. I remember an end who got three 15-yard penalties Coach Bryant's first year. He never played any more.

BLEVINS—There are three musts you learn in Alabama football. You must not bust signals, you must block your man, you must not get penalties.

CRENSHAW—Football players are respected at Alabama now. They weren't. Coach Bryant always told us, you're in the spotlight. You've got to conduct yourself BETTER than the others.

JACKSON—When I came to Alabama a sorority girl wouldn't even date a football player. It's different now.

BLEVINS—Speaking of brutal football, we ran into some at the Liberty Bowl that time. Penn State was brutal the way they knocked our heads off. Andy Stynchula and Maxie Baughan, the Tech boy, were the two roughest players I ever played against. I know Maxie wasn't taught brutality at Tech. He wasn't brutal, he was rough.

PHILLIPS—I remember him. I had to fire out on him. Man, he gave you a headache. You respect that kind of a player.

TRAMMELL—The toughest game I played in for all of my three years was against Georgia Tech. Every year I took a worse beating off them than anyone.

PHILLIPS—I've got a little brother playing junior high football. I think he's going to be good enough. I hope he gets a chance to play under Coach Bryant.

CRENSHAW—He never demanded anything out of anybody that they couldn't give. It's a tough game. You've got to be tougher than the other guys if you're going to win. You've got to be in condition.

TRAMMELL—Playing football has done more for every one of us here than anything. Coach Bryant is the best coach in the country. Playing for him helped me more than anything in the world. No, he's not brutal. He doesn't teach brutal football.

FULLER—The reason Alabama wins is because everybody gives all they've got. That's what Coach Bryant wants, and that's what he gets.

JACKSON—I can't understand all of this publicity. I really can't. What's wrong with winning?

And no one there, panelists or moderator, could think of anything wrong with winning; or with playing the game up to the hilt like it's supposed to be played.

That's Alabama's way. It was good for Dyess, and Richardson, Phillips and Trammell, Blevins and Fuller and Crenshaw and Shirley and Dabbs. Some were stars. Some were not. Obviously not all who've played at Alabama would second the motion here. But the testimony of these who were there must be given much more credence than heresay printed from a distance.

9. FACE TO FACE

There had been a magazine article. Saturday Evening Post called it "The Story of A College Football Fix," and Curtis Publishing Co. later would settle Paul Bryant's libel suit, brought on by this article, for \$300,000, tax-free, which is quite a chunk of vindication. A Sunday in mid-March sent Bryant to state-wide television, and the hero of many a Sunday afternoon replay of the game films during football season today was an angry, dramatic figure telling his world that there was no truth to the ridiculous charge he'd helped "fix" a football game. Trying days were ahead, but Bryant had come out fighting. It has been established that he is much of a fighter.

IT might have been any one of a number of Sunday afternoons in autumn. The lights dangling from the ceiling in the television studio had looked at this scene before. In the corner, a table. On it a nameplate which said, "Coach Bryant."

Silver-haired Frank Taylor, who directs Paul Bryant productions with skill and devotion, September through November, was there to chase a thousand details. Buddy Rutledge, the sports man, had pulled up on the sidelines to watch. Preacher Franklin, who sells a product which Bryant hawks, might be beaming over a commercial any minute.

Presently there'd be background music to stir the soul of an Alabama man, a picture of Denny Chimes on the

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screen, and John Forney would be opening the door for Bryant discussion of the winning of a football game last Saturday, apprehension concerning another coming up next Saturday.

"Well, Coach Bryant," he'd say, "That was a good one. . . ." And he wouldn't need to say any more. Paul Bryant is the man who does the talking on the Paul Bryant Show.

Any Sunday afternoon, any autumn since 1958. Except that this one wasn't. Not at first. This got to be the biggest Sunday of all. And it got that way early.

This morning brought Dr. Frank Rose, Alabama's president, to the Bankhead Hotel in Birmingham. Bryant already was there. Room 914.

Jeff Bennett, assistant to the president, had come. Jeff Coleman, the alumni secretary; Frank Lee, president of Alabama alumni here; Winton Blount, who is a trustee; Bernie Moore, the Southeastern Conference commissioner; Winston McCall, the lawyer.

The faces of these men were grave, as was Bryant's. At 10, Alabama's football coach didn't look like a man who'd slept a great deal. He never does, the night before a game.

Some time after 10, in Room 914, Bryant sat down with a lie detector expert who had a list of questions.

And some time after that, maybe an hour, maybe two, the Alabama men came down from upstairs, through the lobby, across the mountain, into the television station, and the door was locked behind them.

At 3:30, the morning paper and the afternoon paper and the men from the press services and the photographers were admitted. This was the studio audience.

Bryant, soft drink cup in his hand, had grown impatient now. He stopped to talk with Dr. Rose, conferred with Taylor, walked the floor, checked the statement he'd

deliver concerning the latest national magazine attack on him, a favorite among targets.

It was 3:45. It was 4. And now the big man had taken his seat back of the table where he sits on the other Sundays.

Cameras in place. Lights burning. Five minutes to go through the words once more.

"I'm not going to sit up here," said Dr. Rose. "I'm going out there," and he went down closer to Bryant, the coach under fire again from Saturday Evening Post.

Now it was 4:14. Bryant looked up suddenly, yelled something at his friend Franklin, then he beat his hands together, like he'd just come down from the coaching tower, and there was work to be done. There was.

At 4:15, the red light was on, and the face of Paul Bryant faced the people of Alabama.

"This is Paul Bryant of the University of Alabama," he said. And then he hit. He hit again. Halfway through, he came to the clinching argument, the new bombshell aimed at the rumors he had bet, the story full of strangeness which branded him and Wallace Butts "fixers . . . riggers."

The voice was angry, for Bryant was angry. And the eyes signalled willingness to fight back in defense of honor and integrity, and Alabama football.

Defense? It was offense Sunday afternoon. The life and career of Paul Bryant were face to face with the greatest crisis of Paul Bryant's life. But he always was a Big Game Man.

Sunday afternoon he was winning again.

Then the lights were off, and the people were clustering around, shaking hands, smiling, ready to go home.

At 4:30, it might have been any one of a number of Sunday afternoons in autumn.

10. FAR FROM THE PRESSBOX

Managing editors of newspapers are not given to assigning sportswriters to courtrooms, but the Atlanta trial of Wally Butts' \$10-million suit against Curtis Publishing Co. let the football men out of the pressbox. Jesse Outlar of The Atlanta Constitution was there, The News' Benny Marshall and Alf Van Hoose, Fred Russell of The Nashville Banner, F. M. Williams of The Nashville Tennessean, Edwin Pope of The Miami Herald and a dozen others. It was trying, taxing, unfamiliar work, reporting that epic business, but it also was an unforgettable experience. This review of events leading up to the famous libel suit came at the first week-end's recess, halfway through the trial. It was headline news all the way in Birmingham and Alabama for those two hot August weeks in 1963. For those two weeks it was impossible to say "Butts" without "Bryant," or vice versa. Forever, it will be the Butts-Bryant Case.

WHERE did the agony begin?

Go back to the afternoon of Nov. 18, 1961, at Legion Field in Birmingham. That was one of the times when patrons occupied chairs on the track, boards across aisles, stood anywhere they might, for 54,000 seats had been sold and the double-decked stands on the east side could not be used. They'd been ruled unsafe.

Alabama was winning from Georgia Tech, again, and that place on that afternoon is the place to pin-point as

the beginning of the long, long road which led Wallace Butts to a federal courtroom in Atlanta, locked in mortal combat with the magazine known as the Saturday Evening Post, and Paul Bryant standing beside him.

It was late, and Tech was playing it out, obviously beaten, accepting the fact. There was a punt and halfback Chick Graning came loping down beneath it. He was felled by Darwin Holt, the Alabama linebacker; injured painfully, seriously.

Holt, whose forearm had done it, was abjectly apologetic, but the matter wasn't left there, though it was apparent later Graning would have wished it so.

The Atlanta Journal and its sports editor Furman Bisher punished Holt for days, and his coach, Bryant; the one labeled a "dirty" football player, the other a man who taught that way. It was then no great surprise in autumn, 1962, to find Holt and Bryant with prominent places in a Saturday Evening Post article called, "College Football Is Going Berserk."

Furman Bisher was the author.

Bryant was angry. His attorneys, William S. Pritchard and Winston B. McCall, demanded retraction, claiming the article had libeled the Alabama coach. The magazine did not retract, and Pritchard and McCall prepared to file suit.

On Sept. 22, Alabama had walloped Georgia, 35 to 0, opening its new season at Legion Field.

It was on Sept. 13 that George Burnett, an Atlanta insurance man, said later he'd eavesdropped on a telephone conversation between Butts and Bryant and Butts was spilling Georgia secrets to Bryant, Burnett said. On Jan. 4, Bryant sued The Post and Bisher for \$500,000, charging libel in the article "College Football Is Going Berserk." On the same day, coincidentally, Burnett said

he'd decided to tell his story to Bob Edwards, a friend who also was a friend of Johnny Griffith, the Georgia coach. In mid-January, Burnett's account went, they met with Griffith to tell him about the things he said he'd overheard. Griffith then went to Georgia authorities, he said.

On Feb. 21, Southeastern Conference Commissioner Bernie Moore heard Burnett's story. On Feb. 23, Butts was called to Atlanta to a meeting of the Georgia athletic board. Wally sat down with these men, most of them old friends—though he doubts the friendliness of some of them now—and they told him how Burnett had listened in, showed him the notes which were "proof" and wanted to know about it.

Apparently, Butts' answers were satisfactory, until late, when someone mumbled something about a "lie detector test." Would Wally take one?

Butts rose to his feet, pale, trembling. "I have known you for 24 years," he said. "If you can't believe me now . . . I have never been so insulted in my life! I'm going to get me a lawyer."

The next day The Atlanta Journal announced Butts' resignation as athletic director, its pipeline apparently board member Cook Barwick. And the wheels were grinding angrily. Soon the pieces would all come together.

Nothing stays a secret. There was a call from Atlanta to my desk in Birmingham, then another. Saturday Evening Post was preparing a new story about Bryant. Then the rumor came from all directions. Back of this much smoke, there had to be a blaze. Someone had built a fire.

Dr. Frank Rose, Alabama's president, was called to a conference with Commissioner Moore and Dr. O. C. Aderhold, the Georgia president, to hear the charges which had been made against Butts, involving Bryant

and Alabama. Later Dr. Rose wrote a letter to Dr. Adershold denying that the two coaches had been involved in any underhanded activity.

Presently, Sports Illustrated magazine had produced a note hinting at dark disclosures presently to shake the Southeastern Conference. The Miami Herald's Edwin Pope wrote that the SEC was looking into "charges involving heavy betting and unethical transmission of confidential information."

Throughout magazine publishing circles which sometimes employ "spies" to learn who's coming out with what, it was known now that the Saturday Evening Post did, indeed, have something on the way.

On Friday, March 15, the telephone rang again.

"Coach Bryant has asked that you and Alf Van Hoose attend a press conference at his lawyers' offices," said Dr. Don McDaniel, the publicity man-academic counselor who later became dean of men at Memphis State.

This was a grim afternoon. Bryant smiled confidently for photographers, but he was deeply disturbed. Information was there. The Post had an article, "The Story of A College Football Fix," which it would publish in the issue due out March 23. William Schroder, Butts' Atlanta attorney, had warned The Post not to publish, but the magazine was going ahead. It had done so.

Bryant and Butts were attacking first. They denied all charges. On the Sunday after the article appeared, Bryant said it on statewide television. A statement from Dr. Rose and Alabama's board of trustees supported him. Friends, alumni, fans pledged their faith in him, gathered around him. Paul Bryant was not alone.

Meanwhile, Butts took a lie detector test. Schroder filed suit for \$10 million against The Post. Bryant followed with a \$5 million suit. Georgia Attorney General Eugene Cook

began what he called an investigation of the charges. An Alabama legislative committee and Alabama Attorney General Richmond Flowers leaped into the fray.

Cook's investigation, which obtained statements from several Georgia assistant coaches that the information Burnett said he'd heard could have affected the outcome of the game, concluded that Butts had given Georgia secrets to Bryant. Butts was having difficulty finding friends who'd speak out. One, John C. Carmichael, who had testified early to Cook, finally became disturbed that what he'd said had not been released. Carmichael forced it out, and it appeared in Atlanta papers, though given a good deal less attention than anti-Butts material. What Carmichael said, in effect, was that George Burnett was telling two stories, and he'd been there when Burnett said he eavesdropped.

The Alabama investigation, which sent Flowers into Georgia to talk to figures in the case there, concluded that no evidence "worthy of belief" had been found which indicated the charges true.

Now, Saturday Evening Post was rumored to be preparing a new blockbuster. What came, in the April 27 issue, was hardly a blockbuster. It was an editorial saying that the things which had been said before were true. The Post was out on a limb.

Pritchard and McCall promptly sued Curtis Publishing Co.—publishers of The Post—for \$5 million more. Now Bryant, building off the original \$500,000 base against The Post and Bisher for "College Football Is Going Berserk," was asking \$10,500,000.

The U. S. Senate's McClellan anti-rackets committee, all the while, was looking into gambling aspects of the matter, the game Saturday Evening Post said was "fixed." It found no gambling. It reported so.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

The Southeastern Conference was investigating and issued a statement. It probably was one of the silliest-sounding statements ever put together by a group of educators, the SEC Executive Committee. The statement "deplored the conduct as alleged," but declined to take immediate action because the case was in litigation. The NCAA said it was investigating. Most of the investigations had one sad thing in common. They weren't investigating Saturday Evening Post, or George Burnett, or Frank Graham, Jr., whose name was on the article, or Furman Bisher, who gathered material for it, and who finally admitted his participation in preparation of this thing. They investigated Butts and Bryant. They found nothing.

The summer wore on. There was a pre-trial hearing in Atlanta. The Post, answering interrogations from Butts' lawyers, said that Bisher had supplied information for the article carried under Graham's by-line.

It was disclosed that Burnett, who first had denied receiving money for the article, saying he was moved by a "compulsive desire" to tell the truth, had been paid \$5000 by the magazine for the information he said he'd heard, though the magazine never saw the notes he said he took, which were the basis for "The Story of A College Football Fix."

Backstage, the legal men were busy and none busier than Butts' Schroder and Allen Lockerman, Bryant's Pritchard and McCall. And backstage, of course, is where much goes on that stays out of sight forever.

Monday, Aug. 5 (1963) in Judge Lewis Morgan's court in Atlanta, Butts' case was gaveled into being, and into sports history. Bryant was a staunch witness for the former Georgia athletic director.

It had been a long and torturous road, built upon much of the misery of men. And it all began on Nov. 18, 1961,

FAR FROM THE PRESSBOX

when Paul Bryant's first step toward the pages of Saturday Evening Post was taken, not by his choice, not by his or Butts' intent.

On Saturday, Nov. 18, 1961, Wallace Butts was watching Auburn beat Johnny Griffith's Georgia Bulldogs, 10 to 7, on a 47-yard field goal by Woody Woodall.

Tuesday morning, Aug. 20, 1963, a jury which had listened for two weeks to the evidence in the case of Wallace Butts vs. Curtis Publishing Co., returned a verdict for Butts in the amount of \$3,060,000, a record-breaking libel judgment. Curtis announced an appeal. Later, Lewis Morgan, the trial judge, reduced the judgment to \$460,000 because he regarded it as excessive, and it was still a record. Bryant had the best line for the happy day in Atlanta when Butts and his family got winning word. "Hey, Wally," Bryant asked, "What happened to the rest of the money?" Then began the long, slow trip through the appeals courts. Long after Bryant had collected, Butts still waited for final settlement.

11. THE TALKING CHECK

Wally Butts had fought a court fight for history in Atlanta, and won it, but his judgment against Curtis Publishing Co. for "The Story of A College Football Fix" was tangled in appeals. Bryant would go to court in Birmingham within two weeks. Then, suddenly, he wouldn't. Curtis had settled for \$300,000 in February of 1964. The coach and Carney Laslie and I waited over coffee at a hotel for the lawyers to come, and presently here was Winston McCall. He had two checks. Why, I never discovered, but Paul Bryant let the sportswriter hold one for just a moment because it was as close as the sportswriter ever would come to a great chunk of the stuff. Felt good, too. For the man who now was vindicated, completely, there was satisfaction. There was still anger, too, and it would never go away, not for as long as he lived.

THE long year had ended, leaving "The Story of A College Football Fix," as the undisputed champion, the most expensive magazine article ever thrown together. A distinction, of a sort, I suppose, for Saturday Evening Post, which printed it.

Curtis Publishing Co. lawyers issued a statement. Paul Bryant lawyers issued a statement. This was Tuesday, about noon. At 1:30, at the swank new Parliament House, Winston McCall eased into a chair at the table where

Bryant and Carney Laslie, his good right arm, and a reporter waited.

"Well, here you are, Paul," said McCall, old friend and attorney, and he was pleased. McCall extended an envelope.

Bryant opened it, looked at one slip of paper, at another, smiled faintly, tucked two checks in his pocket and allowed as how he bet his creditors were lined up on the outskirts of Tuscaloosa waiting for him.

Then he and Laslie said good-bye, shook hands around, went out to the car and drove away home. Mary Harmon Bryant would be waiting there. She'd said Tuesday morning, knowing big news was imminent, "I slept last night, all night, for the first time in a year," and she yawned pleasantly, happily at the telephone.

Paul Bryant, Jr., would be home, too. A tall young college man who quietly idolized his father. Mae Martin McClellan, daughter of the coach, had been to see him earlier with a grand-daughter. She was faintly reproachful, "They tell me to be so secretive, and I didn't tell anybody, then I heard it on the radio driving over here to see papa."

And for any who wonder why Paul Bryant accepted \$300,000 from Curtis Publishing Co. in settlement of a \$10,000,000 libel suit, it's spelled out right there.

Mary Harmon Bryant. . . . Paul Bryant, Jr. . . . Mae Martin McClellan, who reminds you of her mother. . . . Those are the reasons why. It's a matter of the heart. Having to do with great devotion.

The long year which Saturday Evening Post set in motion with its charge last March that Bryant and Wally Butts had "fixed" a football game was made even more agonizing for this man by his knowledge that his family hurt the most.

THE TALKING CHECK

He shared the sleepless nights, and he worried over the worry in the faces of his children. It wasn't a thing he'd talk about, but his eyes knew how tears feel, and Bryant, inside, is far tougher than most.

The prospect of a fight in a courtroom didn't bother him, not for himself, because he was burning mad, angry and bitter that such had come to pass.

Like the day the words boiled out of him as he sat on the witness stand at the Butts trial in Atlanta. . . . "Taking their money isn't enough. Whoever's responsible for this ought to go to jail. . . ."

But the wives and children of men in courtroom fights often are made to suffer most. Bryant knows. And that's why he was willing to settle. He didn't tell me; I know.

Now, about these statements. Curtis Publishing Co. representatives, still embroiled in strife with Butts, appealing the judgment he won, might issue many statements. But the loudest talking of all was done by the checks Winston McCall delivered to his client. Now, there was a statement.

Three hundred thousand dollars is retraction, vindication, and anything else Bryant might choose to call it, if he were talking. It's a telling admission that somebody knew a grievous wrong had been done, and it could not be defended.

Dr. Frank Rose, Alabama's president, had a statement, too. It made sense. Dr. Rose said, "The fact that Curtis Publishing Co. has paid the sum of \$300,000—which I understand to be one of the largest amounts ever paid in a libel case—fortifies the vindication given Coach Bryant by the verdict of the jury in the Wallace Butts case and the conclusions of Judge Morgan."

The judge who tried the case said, reviewing the Butts verdict, "The article was clearly defamatory and extreme-

ly so. . . . The guilt of the defendant was so clearly established by the evidence in the case as to have left the jury no choice but to find the defendant (Curtis Publishing Co.) liable. . . ."

So ended the Bryant end of Bryant-Butts, a strange chapter in the history of intercollegiate athletics, and of magazine-writing. Strangeness persisted right to the end, with Curtis' insistence that an impartial jury could not be gotten together to try the case in Birmingham.

At Atlanta, that August, Curtis went into court buttressed by an "investigation" conducted by Georgia Attorney General Eugene Cook, which tried Butts and found him guilty, ahead of time. Cook's disclosures were trumpeted in a manner to suggest that some newspaper men had lost all objectivity. Counter-attacks were lost in the shuffle. Cook and his clique did not distinguish themselves.

Georgia's president had lent his office to the kangaroo court Cook conducted, and Johnny Griffith, the coach, went along. Butts brought suit in a city in a state which had heard nothing except ill of him for months.

"The Story of a College Football Fix," weird, dastardly and disgraceful production, couldn't stand up in that climate. And that's why Curtis was willing to settle in Birmingham. They didn't tell me. I heard the evidence. I know.

There's a lesson in all of this, and a reminder of a great responsibility to truth borne by men who write and men who publish. The cost can get too high. That's how the George Burnett-Johnny Griffith-Frank Graham, Jr.-Furman Bisher-Saturday Evening Post production finished up.

Burnett was paid \$5,000 by Curtis Publishing Co. for an affidavit. No one at Saturday Evening Post even saw the

THE TALKING CHECK

notes he said he took while eavesdropping on a telephone conversation.

Graham was paid \$2,000 to write an article about the affidavit, reaching unbelievable conclusions.

Bisher was paid \$1,000 to get some extra stuff for Graham to put in the article.

Paul Bryant was paid \$300,000 to stay out of court.

Then, who shall we say won this miserable game?





Well Done

12. HAIL FROM THE CHIEF

Dr. Frank Rose, Alabama's president; Paul Bryant, Jeff Coleman and Pat Trammell, the great quarterback, were Alabama's official delegation to the Hall of Fame dinner in New York Dec. 6, 1961. There they would receive the MacArthur Trophy to go with all the other honors earned by a national championship football team, and the appearance of President John F. Kennedy to congratulate Alabama's student body back home was a tremendous addition to the program. A newspaperman needed to be there. It was too late for security clearance. Perhaps now I'll go to jail but for one night I was "Dr. Marshall" of the University of Alabama board of trustees, who had come in unexpectedly during the afternoon. Dr. Rose showed no inclination to make the appointment permanent, however.

IT was 7:30 in New York, which is 6:30 in Alabama.

Outside, the big town swirled up and down in its nightly rush to get no-place in a hurry.

Inside, at the Waldorf-Astoria, the ballroom was crowded with people, and loud with voices, and big football names were a dime a dozen about the place.

It was getting right tense in Room 804, upstairs. There was a telephone to the left, and another to the right, and another hooked up to a microphone.

"That one," Tom Russell pointed, and Dr. Frank Rose,

president of the University of Alabama, sat down and took it up.

"Is Jeff Bennett there?" he asked, "Jeff? That band's going to have to quiet down some." He looked across the room to Paul Bryant, his football coach, who stood beside Pat Trammell, the quarterback, and grinned. "Paul, from the sound of it, we might not have a university when we get back."

Alabama's student body had gathered to render proper student-body homage to a national football championship. At Tuscaloosa, happy people waited.

"Now, this is the way we'll do it," Dr. Rose said, and he had his procedure outlined, nice and orderly. Presently, he was speaking from New York to the University of Alabama, in joy assembled.

Then Trammell was on, thanking them all, a good-looking boy, poised, a fine football player, a good college senior from Alabama who'd be a doctor.

Coach Bryant was next, and Young J. Boozer, and Jeff Coleman, the alumni man. "Where's Mel Allen?" Dr. Rose asked, and no one knew. But in a moment, the sportscaster who is an Alabama alumnus had come beaming to the room. There was a sports writer from back home privileged to say, "Congratulations!" too, then Mel had a word, and by now, company had come.

The Secret Service detail, I suppose, was left at the door, for the President of the United States had walked in and everybody rose.

John Kennedy had a sheet of paper in his hand, and he listened as Allen talked, scratching another note or two.

Now Frank Rose, from the University of Alabama, could tell his students, and all his people, "It's my honor to present the President."

HAIL FROM THE CHIEF

Easily, the former scrub from Harvard lifted the phone, and surely the cheer at Tuscaloosa must have been tremendous, splitting the sky. It isn't often that Presidents come to say "Well done" to a football team, and to a school.

Mr. Kennedy did that night, and he did it well. The words were standard, routine. They don't invent new ones, but for those of us standing by watching and listening the moment was electric.

"This is history, isn't it?" Jeff Coleman whispered. It was.

I don't know how long it lasted, how long the President spoke. Maybe two minutes, maybe three. They signed Room 804 off the air, he smiled around, was introduced, shook hands and exchanged pleasantries.

"Mr. President," the football coach of the University of Alabama said to him, "You're about to become the first President in history to get an Alabama football letter."

The President of the United States grinned back at the football coach: "Would you let me play, just a couple of minutes?"

"How did those Mississippi teams do?" he asked Trammell, and Pat told him how it was with Ole Miss and State.

"I was wondering what was that coach's name?" he asked Allen, who'd made reference to Paul Bryant's old coach in his talk to the cheering students back home. "Frank Thomas," somebody said, and the President nodded his head, "Yes, I remember."

It was 7:45 now, and the band below waited to play, "Hail to the Chief," so the chief went away, as quietly, quickly as he'd come. In a little while, he'd accept a medal, laugh at some Bob Hope jokes and make a speech himself. It was an intense one, urging this nation to quit watching and start playing, to stop walking and start running, to become vigorous, physically and mentally again.

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There was a prayer at the end of the Hall of Fame evening which saw Alabama receive the MacArthur Trophy as the No. 1 team in the nation, and a minister asked: "God, help this man who leads us."

And in the stillness of the night, in a hotel room far from home and celebrations, I could say it, too, for the great young man with the weight of a world in trouble on his shoulders who took time out to come to Room 804 last night for the University of Alabama.

I was glad I got to shake his hand. Real glad.

13. CITY SLICKER, ALMOST

Most exclusive party in the country is the Gridiron Club's annual party in Washington, a jesting, needling gathering of headliners from all over the country. Make that guest list and you have arrived. Bryant made it in April of 1964, and don't doubt that he was impressed. He took time off from spring football practice to go. There was a bit of poetic license taken in the composing of the column which touched on the visit. The man who told me first about losing his hat was the man who had knocked it off when he climbed from the cab, and the joke aimed at himself pleased Paul Bryant no end. Newspaper friends filled out the story.

INFORMATION was secured second-hand, but I gather that Saturday night was a large night out in the life of Paul W. Bryant, coach of Alabama football. It came about in Washington, headquarters for a nation.

Something almost always happens to keep the great moments in perspective, lest a guy get too big for his britches. When Bryant climbed out of the taxicab at the door of that most exclusive of dinners which is Washington's Gridiron Club party, the top hat he wore in greatest formality made that tall one a mite too long. Off toppled the hat. The country boy from Arkansas who wore it stooped, reached, retrieved, and marched in, signing autographs along the way with all the aplomb of any city slicker you ever saw.

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A fellow who was there ranked Bryant, top hat and all, No. 2 in autograph signing before the night was done, and didn't say who was first, former President Harry Truman, or might-have-been-president Richard Nixon, who came in the same door. I'd bet on Harry, but I'm a sportswriter Democrat, of course.

Much of the program put on by Washington newspapermen was devoted to the life and cashing-in of Bobby Baker, as you would have read elsewhere. It was, as customary, a nothing-sacred evening full of needles to puncture all manner of pomposity, but light-heartedly, sort of. They kid. Maybe they don't mean it.

Came the time when Bryant of Alabama was to be introduced. The coach of the Crimson Tide, the only sports man in attendance at this gathering of great names, stood to polite applause. But the house went tumbling down, caved in by laughter, when the introducer followed up with, "Don't call me. Let me call you. I don't have as much money as Saturday Evening Post."

Bryant was tracked down on Sunday after he had returned to home country and gotten all the reports on Saturday Denny Stadium scrimmage.

"Yep," he confirmed, "that's about right about the hat. Don't know about the autographs. I don't think I've ever been around as many big men in my life, all at one time."

The president of U.S. Steel was there, and Harry and Dick, who said, "Hi, Bear," and S. I. Newhouse, whose vast newspaper holdings include Alabama's largest and best, and top guys from all over the country.

Many people don't know it, for pride and success cover up a lot of things, but the top guy who coaches the Crimson Tide carries within him a world of humility which wears well, and is genuine.

"I don't know why they would ask me," Bryant said.

"But I'm sure glad they did." He was, too, even if the entrance was bare-headed, at first.

There are governors of states who don't get invited to Gridiron Club dinners, who'd give an eyetooth. And here was the son of a farmer from Arkansas who couldn't have dreamed 30 years ago that time and circumstance would put him in this spotlight at an occasion resembling a Hollywood premiere.

If it's possible, I think Paul Bryant might have forgotten football for just a little while that Saturday night, if the people would let him.

He is a man not easily awed. He might have been this time, but he'd remember that the game he played and the game he teaches and the dedication he gives to it, made it all come to pass. And along about here you get involved once more with the dreams the boys of America dream.

Every now and then, they still come out good and true, and it's good that realization should come anew at a party given by a bunch of ink-stained wretches who write for newspapers. They amass no riches, but it is given to them to puncture balloons now and then. The calling is noble, and needful.

14. THE HIGH AND THE HUMBLE

In late December, 1961, Alabama's national champions had pitched camp in Biloxi, Miss., awaiting a Sugar Bowl date with Arkansas which they would win. The door to the room was open just a little, and maybe the man heard the typewriter clicking, or maybe he was just looking for company. He stopped and came in, and left a story in a notebook which could be pulled out and put on paper a month or so later when he was named "Coach of the Year" for the United States. For a man in the college football business, there is no higher accolade than this recognition which comes from coaches across the country. They voted; Bryant was a landslide winner. And I remembered the pigs on the road to Fordyce, Ark.

AT the time, it wasn't a story to be written. Maybe it shouldn't have been at all, but . . .

Paul Bryant had come from a meeting with his football squad that night at Biloxi the week before the Sugar Bowl, and he'd ducked in out of the cold for a minute or two.

No press conference. Just a visit. Relaxing. Hidden from the telephone which rings on overtime.

The coach of Alabama's national champions had heard from home, and Paul Jr., who had the flu, was better. It was cold in Tuscaloosa, too. Quiet talk. Easy. That's the way it was.

If Bryant's a man of many moods, as it's popular to say, this was his best. Essentially, like most all the great ones, Paul Bryant walks alone. The door isn't opened often. This night, it was. So we sat and we talked, about nothing very much, nothing special.

Somewhere along the way, it was suggested, "You've been a lucky man." And Paul Bryant could agree with that, though I think he lives by a rule which insists, most of the time, "You make your own luck."

Then he was remembering how it had been long ago, at home, in Arkansas, and he was a boy, one of 12 children with an invalid father.

"I was going to town, to Fordyce," he said. "We had 10 little pigs, and daddy gave them to me to sell. If I could get a dollar each, he would let me keep half of it.

"I couldn't have been more than 10 or 11, I don't suppose. We were still living in the bottoms. So I hitched up and started to town, and somewhere I got the wagon stuck.

"Nothing I tried would work. Finally, I guess I just sat there and cried. It didn't look like I could do anything. I couldn't sell the pigs. I wouldn't get the money.

"I must have been there nearly all day. But finally somebody came by, and they got me out of the mud, and I drove on to Fordyce and sold those pigs in no time at all.

"Then I went home. No. I never told them the trouble I'd had. My daddy never knew.

"But I had to be lucky. You're right. It wouldn't have happened like it did if I hadn't been lucky. We'd have never moved to Fordyce. I wouldn't have played football. I never would have gotten to the University of Alabama. I've been lucky in my wife, my friend. I'd still be out there plowing somewhere if I hadn't been lucky."

He could smile at the thought, in a luxurious motel

years away from the afternoon when the wagon wouldn't go, and the pigs wouldn't be sold. And, all of a sudden, bleakness was made light, and despair became joy.

Things have had a way of coming out right for Paul William Bryant, who the previous Saturday night had stepped to the place of honor in Chicago to accept the acclamation of his fellowmen in the coaching world.

The country boy from Arkansas was "Coach of the Year."

It was a month after Time magazine had hauled out a knife for cutting, and used it, when somebody came by saying why don't you do a piece on Paul Bryant, Bryant as you know him. Bryant as he really is.

The suggestion was good, and I struggled with it, and finally gave up for then for the simple reason that after three years of the close association that our jobs brought, I couldn't sit down then and define this man. After seven years, it still is not an easy thing.

Like all of us, the "Coach of the Year" is compounded of many things. The bottom-land outside Fordyce is part of him, and will be forevermore. So are Hank Crisp, Paul Burnum, Frank Thomas, and Mary Harmon Bryant, the lovely lady who is his wife.

I think that the bottoms outside Fordyce gave him humbleness which is real and will not go away. I think they built a fire in him, too. Bryant blazes. Failure is abhorrent. He *MUST* be first.

And his chief coaching talent might be the ability to build the same kind of a fire in other men who work for him and who play the game for him that Earl Blaik calls "closest to war."

"Why don't some of these writers ask us how he is?"

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

Billy Neighbors demanded of me once. "We could tell them."

So there is loyalty. It always works both ways. Paul Bryant does not have a short memory.

Angered, and bewildered by the sudden outburst against Darwin Holt after the Georgia Tech game, it was Bryant who said, finally, "He's my boy. What would I do but stand up for him?" Any other course was unthinkable. That's Bryant, too.

As a source of news, some find him exasperating at times. If he chooses not to unbend, then unbend he does not. On the other hand, he can charm the typewriter out of a man's hand, and will.

He is impatient with anything less than complete devotion to duty. Working time is for working. But there's no more enjoyable company after hours than he. The man scowls often during a football season. Often, thereafter, he laughs.

Sometimes, the adulation of the mob irritates him. Friends' praise pleases him, though he waits not for pats on the back.

He is the most supremely self-confident human being I have ever known, and that's a quality which a detractor might label arrogance. Mentally, he's tough, and that's the only word which fits, but he's a sentimentalist, too, though he mightn't admit it.

Business associates know him as a man who knows what's going on. His world doesn't begin and end on a football field, though this is most of it.

Outside his game, Paul Bryant has prospered. He had made a pile of luck for himself, and success chases after him now like he invented the word.

That Saturday night in Chicago, they put him up on

THE HIGH AND THE HUMBLE

the peak. Paul Bryant, of Alabama, "Coach of the Year." Here was the highest honor of them all.

When they called him up front of the rest, I wonder if Paul William Bryant remembered about the pigs. I know now that it was a story which wanted writing.

It takes a lot of things and a lot of days and a lot of people to make a "Coach of the Year."



If You Love To Play

15. IF YOU LOVE TO PLAY

It is not surprising that the man this collection is all about should own great affection for the game which took him from Fordyce, Ark., to Alabama, to the tops of all sorts of mountains; nor surprising that he should remember how it started. Paul Bryant is a rare mixture of great self-confidence and genuine humility, and he will not hesitate to laugh at himself. It takes persistence to get him talking about himself, but there's a delightful assortment of memories to be stored up listening, looking, taking notes, and filing it all away for the people who say, "Somebody ought to write a book." Well, all right, then.

IQUOTE from the Paul Bryant Book on football, which is not the one Bryant and Gene Stallings put together, best-seller like and completely technical, a few years back.

This is the one that comes out in the middle of the night, driving back from somewhere, or somewhere else in a talk, or maybe just sitting around home thinking things over, late. It's a winner, too.

The coach of Alabama started putting his facts together a long while ago. Here's how he feels when he marches on a practice field the first day of a football season. This I know.

"It's all based on one thing," Bryant has his game figured. "And that is if you love to play. If you don't, you shouldn't be out there on a practice field."

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

"There's no sin in not liking to play. The boy makes a mistake who is there and not wanting it.

"So here the boy is—and I'm not just talking about a boy at Alabama. I mean a boy at Auburn, at Georgia Tech—anywhere. Assuming that he loves it, here is his opportunity to be all the time doing something he wants to do, something everybody doesn't like to do. And something, for sure, that everybody can't do.

"He has made himself a part of a big thing. He has associated himself with the best group of kids in the world, and it doesn't matter where he is. If the system is right, he's with the best group he'll ever be with, his teammates.

"He has been accepted by an institution and its alumni. He has been given an alma mater, something to tie to. In football at our level he's going to have the opportunity to go a lot of places, first-class, and perform before thousands of people, or even millions, and his family and the others he loves.

"He's getting his foot in the door for the future, gaining recognition, and he's learning some mighty important lessons about living.

"Sure there are times when he'll hate to put on that smelly uniform. That's football. There'll be times when he gets mad at his best friend, but they forget it. There'll be times when he's cussing his coach under his breath.

"He's going to have to do a lot of hard work, learning, but he's going to be having fun eating and sleeping and just being with the boys he thinks so much of. They respect each other.

"And it all comes down to those Saturdays. The band's playing and the cold shivers are running up your back, and you're a big man playing for a lot of people.

"That's when a boy KNOWS just how much it is meaning to him.

IF YOU LOVE TO PLAY

"And if he loves the game and if he gives it everything he has in him, right then he's one of the luckiest young men anywhere in the world."

* * *

The name of Marlin Dyess had popped up in the course of a conversation. Dyess was a young man from Elba, Alabama, who might have weighed 147 pounds, played halfback for Alabama and looked about as much like a football player as Jimmy Thompson once did at Tech. Which is to say, he didn't.

The question was inevitable and the big man had an answer when it came: "What do you think of little-man football players?"

"Why," he said, "they look just as good to me pitching the ball to that official behind the goal line as the big ones do." Then he was exploring the subject. "We're not kidding anybody. Like anyone, we prefer good big ones, but I've had lots of good little ones in my time.

"What we think is . . . bigness is in the heart."

Bryant HAS had some good ones who weren't sizable citizens to prove his point. Two of them, Gene Stallings and Bobby Keith, played championship Southwest Conference line in the 170s. Kentuckians will remember Harry and Larry Jones, and Texas A & M can look fondly back at Lloyd Taylor and Don Watson, "who wasn't as big as your fist."

Hanceville in Alabama sent another one, if it's heart you're interested in, and hearts do jobs. Murray Trimble wasn't big. He had only one arm. But he became a fighting terror of a Texas A & M guard.

* * *

Informality is the keynote when Paul and Mary Harmon Bryant are hosts at their home on beautiful Lake Martin.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

And that permits me to recall the night when the coach and some psuedo fishermen in his party set off to investigate some lines set out earlier. As their boat nosed against the undergrowth scratchily, Coach Bryant felt it was time to do some coaching.

"Somebody's doing a sorry job of steering this boat," he said.

"What's that, Paul?" came the quiet voice of Dr. Frank Rose from the stern. Afterwards, Alabama's football coach permitted Alabama's president to steer Alabama's sports-writers any way he chose.

. . .

Paul Bryant was searching through his desk. He was, plain to see, a man with a problem. Perhaps he had misplaced a halfback, a visitor inquired; or a check from Curtis Publishing Co.?

"It's a letter," he said. "I try to answer all my mail and I guess I lost this one. Now I can't answer it because I don't have the name of the boy who wrote it. You and I think we've got problems but this kid has a real one.

"I can almost recite the letter. It was something like this: 'My name is Bill Jones (or whatever) and I have a very serious problem and want your help. I'm 13 years old and I weigh 105 pounds, but I'm one of the fastest men on the squad. I'm out for 'B' team at fullback. The other day we were scrimmaging and I was playing defensive right end. The halfback ran a sweep play around my end and the boy running interference weighs 185 pounds. He hit me and knocked me five yards high.

"The next time they ran the play, I dodged the big boy and tackled the boy with the ball. My problem is, Coach chewed me out. He said don't dodge, knock him

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down, then make the tackle. That is easier said than done. Please advise me how to handle the situation."

Abigail Van Bryant was willing, he said, but loss of the boy's name and address prevented an answer. And what will your answer be, what wisdom for this lad, the visitor pressed.

"I will not discuss my personal correspondence further," said the man with the problem about a boy with a problem.

• • •

A man looking for something to write about is on good listening ground when Southeastern Conference people sit around to swap stories, prior to more serious business.

"This goes back a ways," Paul Bryant said in preamble to a story he was plainly about to enjoy telling. "It was in 1948 at Kentucky. We lost three in a row, then beat Marquette, and Cincinnati was next. We were 14-point underdogs.

"We got out to the stadium and dressed and went out to warm up. I noticed Cincinnati wasn't out yet and I thought to myself: 'Now what are they trying to pull?' That Sid Gillman (then Cincinnati coach) is tricky.

"Cincinnati still hadn't shown up when we went in. I knew it was a trick now. The players were inside milling around. I told 'em to sit down, like you will, and I was walking back and forth, like I do, just waiting.

"I was wondering, too. Then I went back in the back and for some reason looked at my watch and it struck me like lightning what had happened. I had been thinking they were on Eastern Daylight Time; they were Eastern. I had taken my football team out there early, one whole hour.

"No I didn't say anything. What would you say? I

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just kept walking and walking and my players kept sitting. Man, I must have walked nine miles, waiting.

"Finally, it was time. Now you've heard of football teams tearing down the door to get out of a dressing room. That's what my Kentucky team did. Did we win? Sure we did, 28-0. And after the game when I was talking with Gillman, he asked me, 'What's this you're doing, coming out early like that?' I just went on; I sure wasn't going to tell him what had happened.

"In fact, I didn't plan ever to tell anybody about it. It was, I guess, eight or ten years later when Carney Laslie and Frank Moseley—they were assistant coaches there—were talking about it one night. They said it was the greatest job of psychology they had ever seen worked by a coach getting his team ready to play.

"Psychology, my eye! I had to tell them then."

* * *

The question was: "What made you a coach?" The answer was similarly uncomplicated.

"I'd never seen a football in my life out there in the country where we lived. We rode a mule and wagon to a little old country school at Kingsland, Arkansas, but they didn't play football there. They played basketball at noon, but I had to feed that mule. And after school they played; I had to hitch up and go back home.

"But mama wanted us to go to school in a bigger place. So she got this big old house in Fordyce and took in boarders and we moved up there.

"I'd heard 'em talking about football. One day I slipped in to see a game. It was about the half, and I saw they were butting heads and when a boy came off, they'd clap like he was a big hero. I guess I could picture myself with all those people clapping for me.

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"The next Monday I went out where they were practicing. I was 13 years old I guess. And the fellow running the thing said, 'Do you want to play?' I told him, 'Yessir, I guess so. How do you play?'

"They were covering punts, I realized later. The coach told me, 'You run down there and when that fellow catches the ball, you try to kill him.'

"So somebody kicked it, and the boy caught it, and I managed to hit him. Right then I knew, 'This is for me.'

"The next week I started a game. From then on, all I thought was football. All through Alabama, it never crossed my mind to do anything but football.

"I was going to play some pro ball, though I wasn't good enough to make any real money, but Coach (Frank) Thomas was responsible for me going into coaching. He just flat told me. He said that as much as I liked football, as much as I wanted to stay in it, the thing was to go ahead and get started coaching. I've got him to thank. But from that day in Fordyce, nothing much entered my mind except football. It was what I wanted."

* * *

When Paul Bryant says, "You're never beaten until the clock runs out," he isn't just whistling "Yay, Alabama!" Two games in particular come to mind, one the almost-unbelievable Alabama comeback that nailed Georgia Tech 16-15 in 1960 (detailed elsewhere between these covers).

Then there was a day in 1955. Bryant's Texas Aggies trailed Rice 6-0, then 12-0 with less than three and a half minutes to play. Win? By now, with the goal line 59 yards away, most Aggie fans were hoping only to avoid a whitewash. Presently the clock DID run out on the Aggies—as they were leading 20-12 and driving toward a fourth touchdown!

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First, Lloyd Taylor ran 59 yards for a touchdown. Gene Stallings claimed a successful onside kick and on first down an A & M pass got six more points and the lead. Desperate Rice came throwing, trying to reclaim its ball game, and the Aggies' Jack Pardue intercepted, hammering back to the two, then charged over. 20-12, and time for yet another interception, and another Aggie drive, but finally the clock did run out of seconds.

* * *

"It must have been in the spring of 1934, the year we had our great team," Paul Bryant said. He was grinning now, awaiting the kickoff that would send Reds against Whites in Alabama's spring game, one of traditional Crimson Tide ruggedness.

"We had dates for the dance. Riley Smith, Don Hutson, Dixie Howell and I. But Coach Thomas had said the men who did well in the game the next day would be through with practice. The others would have to go on for two weeks.

Hutson had wanted off. He wanted to play baseball.

"So we had the dance and old Don disciplined himself. He wouldn't go. 'I'm gonna be ready,' he told us. 'I'm gonna stay home and sleep. You can stay up half the night if you want to.'

"I guess we did.

"So the next afternoon here came Hutson, and he was a revved-up football player if you ever saw one. On the second play Howell threw me a little old pass over the middle. That Hutson was going. He blocked a halfback, then he blocked the safetymen and I ran right on for a touchdown. I guess it was the only one I scored at Alabama, in scrimmage or anywhere.

"Coach Hank (Crisp) was in charge of our team. He

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took me right out and then he forgot about me. I sat on the bench the rest of the half, and it was hot. He left Hutson in there and he worked; man, he worked!

"At the half we were tied 6-6 or maybe we were ahead 6-0. Coach Hank was chewing on everybody and on Hutson especially, in the dressing room. 'I know your trouble, Hutson. Your mind's just on baseball. Now that fellow over there—he was talking about me—if you'd been playing like he's been playing, you could get off practice!'"

• • •

The time had come (December, 1962) to ask a question that had wanted asking several weeks. For the rumor had become more than casual among coaching people.

The rumor said that Bryant was prepared to quit coaching. The question was: "Are you?"

To settle the thing quickly the answer was no, but it involved some good breakfast material on the Saturday before Tuesday when the Crimson Tide was to take on Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

"I wouldn't say I haven't thought about it," he said. "Certainly I have. And you can always change your mind, but as long as the University of Alabama thinks it needs me, and as long as I think I'm doing some good, I want to keep right on.

"In Texas, I had made some definite plans on that. There are not many old, healthy coaches, and I had the offer of a real fine job. I was planning on doing it, but when I left there and came to Alabama, it was like starting a new coaching career.

"I'm not prepared to end it now. In the first place, I'm enjoying what I'm doing too much. Secondly, there's a question of bread money. I've got to live. There's a third

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thing. There's a lot been said about the good investments I've made. Some of them aren't so good. You don't retire when you're in debt. And I haven't had folks falling over me with offers of things to do in Alabama besides coach. Oh, I know I could get something, but I'm going to stay in Alabama, now and after.

"I wouldn't want to be just an athletic director. That job has never appealed to me. When the time comes for me to get out, I want to go all the way."

Then, this: "If for health reasons I have to get out, then I'll get. But I don't think that's going to happen. I'm doing what I love to do. This has been my life. I don't want to change it."

* * *

Seven years of observation of Paul Bryant on duty have convinced me that the sight of this man, actively displeased with the work of the young ones he coaches, is a sight every other man should be privileged to see at least once before he buys his last football ticket.

Like the Taj Mahal by moonlight, perhaps; or the tower that leans in Pisa, or Churchill Downs on Derby Day in the last electric instant before the horses thunder from the starting gate.

With Coach Bryant, it comes on sort of slowly.

The tall man will be standing atop the tower which stands between two practice fields, a megaphone in his hands, watching everything at once. It is possible, as Lee Roy Jordan told me once, that he has eyes in the back of his head. He misses nothing.

There will be a shout of encouragement for this block over here, for the pass caught over there.

Then, silence.

Where's the man with the megaphone? The megaphone's still up there. The man is climbing down.

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Apprehension is noted. It grows with every step he takes descending the ladder. Work continues but assistant coaches appear to be a little edgy now as they instruct.

Some players attempt the impossible. How can you move forward when doom is approaching from behind? The earth doesn't tremble but you get the idea.

Now the coach strides out amongst them and errant ones wish they hadn't been so errant.

Coach Bryant has a voice to fit the occasion. It may come very, very low, and sadly, as if the speaker finally had given up all hope that these unworthy students ever would master their lessons.

There is a stern voice, like the one daddy used to use; and a cajoling voice, "Won't you ever . . . ?" and a "Boy, we're going to the woodshed" voice.

Later, those who've played for Bryant and are now men, remember all notes of the scale fondly when they gather and talk about the days that were. But right now the response is instantaneous. They all go harder, coaches and players, and you never saw student managers run so swiftly from place to place when someone shouts "Manager!"

Mostly, as I have listened to it, this is the voice of a leader commanding complete respect, and the troops would ever so much rather it come rumbling down from on high bringing a message of approval earned.

They learn early that devotion to the job is demanded, that lack of excellence can be excused, but lack of trying never.

• • •

An older Paul Bryant, years later, could wonder if maybe the little strategist had pulled a fast one that Saturday afternoon in Birmingham. Frank Thomas knew about psychology, too.

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But at the time, which was Nov. 29, 1934, and the place, which was Legion Field, a younger Paul Bryant wasn't wondering. He was marveling.

"Coach Thomas called the starting team together. I'll never forget it," Bryant remembered while one of his own Crimson Tides made ready for a bowl run. "Then he read us the telegram. Maybe he made it up, but he had a wire, and he said it said: 'If you win, where can we contact you immediately after the game?' And it was signed: Al Masters, Stanford University."

Stanford meant Pasadena and the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day, and this was a dream coming true for young Paul Bryant. He went like on wings to the battle, and so did Howell and Hutson and all the rest. Presently, Alabama had slain Vanderbilt, 34 to 0, and the big end loping to the sidelines two minutes before the finish which was to bring the bowl bid heard Alabama's band playing "California, Here I Come!"

There might have been many football afternoons in the years since, many games in many places, and bowl games in more than ordinary abundance for the Frank Thomas pupil who came back to be Alabama's head coach. New Orleans . . . Miami . . . Dallas . . . Houston, Bryant has made them all in his coaching time. But the caller who'd asked, "Which one do you remember the best?" had his answer quickly.

It was the game that came after Vanderbilt, the one in Pasadena on Jan. 1, 1935 . . . "The thrill of going and getting to play, and when it was over, knowing we'd won. I'd dreamed of something like that. For me it was almost unbelievable, being a very ordinary player among great players.

"And I'd never seen that many people in all my life."



The Price Is Right . . . High

16. PENALTY

With two games remaining (Miami, regular-season, and Ole Miss in the Sugar Bowl) and both of them on national television, Paul Bryant shocked his school, his state, and the whole United States of football late in 1963 by suspending Joe Namath, star quarterback, from Alabama's squad. The coach announced tersely that it was "for disciplinary reasons," clammed up, and would say no more, not out loud. Friends knew. "Wait until next season's over," Bryant said, "then you can write it." So the season ended, and Alabama won them all and was No. 1 in the nation again, and it became a story that could be told because the ending was happily-ever-after.

LATE THURSDAY most of Alabama's Crimson Tidesmen had fought their way through the happy mob of kids outside the dressing room door who wanted something signed, anything signed, as long as the name was Hudson Harris or Creed Gilmer or Steve Bowman, someone famous in a red coat.

Raymond Ogden, who had run a kickoff 100 yards, remained, talking to a reporter.

Joe Namath was taking his time getting dressed, and Steve Sloan, his quarterbacking friend, waited for treatment and advice from Jim Goostree, the trainer, who delayed final operations while he got a shower.

Ogden, patiently, explained again how it was he'd taken the kickoff, gotten the word to go, and found the

blocking set up just right. "All I could think of was running the other way," he said. That is what he did, very far, very swiftly.

Namath waited. "I can tell a better story," he said. "I watched the whole thing."

Then the laughing boy from Beaver Falls, Pa., was combing his hair, squinting at himself in the mirror, and he quarreled with himself just a little about the interception "screwball" he threw. Then he said, "Auburn played a good game," and found his punch line.

"All's well that ends well," said Joe Namath, who shortly would be listening with both ears to hear what the professionals had to tell him.

It is a sentence which has been said before, but I doubt it ever fit a situation better than that of the 1964 Alabama football team, and of the quarterback who came back and joined Steve Sloan in leading it to a perfect season.

The team played "All's well that ends well," all the way through 10 football games. Early adversity never deterred this Crimson Tide. It didn't Thanksgiving Day in the winning of the game that was biggest because it was the last.

And Namath, Joe Willie?

It was Namath's coach who brought the matter up Thursday. "I told you last year he wasn't a bad boy," he said, and added and wanted to make sure it was published: "I'll go further now and say that he has meant a great deal to this football team by his conduct both on and off the field and his great leadership."

There was more, and now was a time you could go back to the day last December when Alabama yet had Miami and Ole Miss to play, and Bryant the coach eased into a chair beside his quarterback in the dining room at the sumptuous dormitory where Alabama athletes live.

PENALTY

"Did you?" Bryant asked Namath, and the question referred to an infraction of training rules, which is not new to college football.

And when the answer was yes, his coach told the boy he had described as the most gifted quarterback Alabama had ever seen, "You're off the squad. You'll have to move out of the dormitory. Coach Bailey will help you get a room somewhere else."

Back at his office, Bryant called his staff together and he told these men what he had done, and he could see consternation in their faces, and they asked him, isn't this going a little too far, can't we have him for the last game, maybe.

Bryant wasn't budging. He sent for Joe Namath, and called him into the room and said "Joe, these men think I made a mistake. They think you should be allowed to play in the bowl game. The only way, Joe, you could play Jan. 1 is for me not to be the coach here."

And Namath looked him in the eye and said, "I don't want that," and went away, banished.

Alabama played Miami, and won, and played Ole Miss and won, because Steve Sloan was there. In the spring Joe Namath was back, and he was better than ever because he was determined to be better than ever. In September, he was better than that.

Then he was hurt, and Sloan was there again, and the two of them brought the show handsomely in. They shared it against Auburn, down to the last moment.

Ogden had gone, and the bandage on Sloan's knee would not let him bend his leg. He needed to be out of there, for his father was waiting.

"Here," said Namath, "Gimme that," and he reached for a sock, and he knelt on the floor in the Alabama dressing room and slipped it carefully on the foot of his friend.

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Then Joe Namath who cannot miss being one of the greatest quarterbacks professional football has ever seen, ducked out the back door of the dressing room. If he thought he'd miss the crowd, he was mistaken.

"Hey, Joel" the kids screamed, "Joel! Joel" and in a little while the good boy from Pennsylvania who grew up to be a splendid football player for Alabama was surrounded again. He grinned, and went to work signing.

Like he said, all's well that ends well.

17. REWARD

In September of the senior season of Joe Namath, the quarterback from Beaver Falls, Pa., Paul Bryant told a friend, "He will get more money to play professional football than anybody who ever signed a contract." Years of association with Alabama's football man teach that when he talks he knows what he's talking about. The New York Jets made it official on the morning after the Jan. 1, 1965 Orange Bowl, first bowl game ever played at night, and they did it with trumpets and a great flourish. Sonny Werblin, who owns the Jets, made the money in show business to buy into professional football; he called on all his training and know-how to see that Namath was given the proper sendoff. And Bryant had been right again. Namath did get more than anybody "who ever signed a contract." And a big brand-new automobile, too.

IN a setting right out of Hollywood, on a bright blue day built in dreamland, Joe Namath became a football professional Saturday morning.

Bright lights blazed and cameras worked overtime as the black-haired, sharpfeatured son of a Pennsylvania steel mill worker told an overflow press conference that he had signed with the New York Jets.

There was no news in the announcement. The fact that Alabama's quarterback had chosen the Jets had been known for several days. But no football team ever gave a

more elaborate sendoff to a rookie than New York's American League entry offered up for the signing-up party of Namath. This was fitting.

Sonny Werblin, owner of the Jets, declined to reveal terms of the three-year contract which Birmingham attorney Mike Bite helped to negotiate, but Werblin said: "To my knowledge, Namath has signed for the greatest amount ever given to an athlete for professional services." Werblin didn't mean football, alone. He meant all sports.

The report was that Namath would receive salary and bonuses in the vicinity of \$440,000. Also, he became owner of a new and most expensive automobile. He might have gotten more. No one except Namath, his lawyer, and a Mr. Paul Bryant, who is his counsellor and friend, could say for certain.

A bum knee which limited Namath's Crimson Tide play for more than half the season appeared of small concern to the million-dollar organization which claimed a quarterback Alabama will remember as a billion-dollar boy.

Namath will compete for the quarterback job at New York with Richard Wood, the former Auburn player from Lanett, and Notre Dame's John Huarte, also a Jet signee. Consensus at the Saturday morning party was that the tough-hearted young man who directed a magnificent Alabama comeback close to victory over Texas in the Orange Bowl would be the winner.

The sky was brightest Florida blue, and the sun sparkled on the ocean outside the giant dining room at the Harbour Inn on Miami Beach when sleepy-eyed newspaper, radio and TV people swarmed in early Saturday to witness the big moment. They'd been up all night on one big story. Here was another.

The day was made perfect for the consummation of

REWARD

the football fairy tale of Joe Namath, who came to Alabama and Bryant from Pennsylvania, and then rode away rich and famous to a future which could not look brighter.

Namath, Werblin, Jet Coach Weeb Ewbank, Coach Bryant and Jets offensive line coach Chuck Knox shared the head table as breakfast was brought on. Coaches Sam Bailey, Ken Meyer, Howard Schnellenberger and trainer Jim Goostree of the Alabama staff mingled with the writing men at their tables hemmed in by television wires and cameras and waiters hurrying to do every man's bidding.

Joe Cahill, the Jets publicity man, was master of ceremonies. Cahill called on Werblin, and Ewbank, and heard Bryant say again: "I'm thankful I've had the privilege of being one of Joe's coaches. He has meant a lot to the state of Alabama and to the university."

Then the big, red-coated man who suspended this super star for two games last year because of a training rules infraction, closed out once more with: "He is the most talented young man I have ever seen."

Bryant poked fun at Ewbank, the discoverer of Johnny Unitas. "They say," Alabama's coach said, "that it takes three or four years to develop a pro quarterback. If it takes that long with this one, Weeb, you're not as good a coach as I thought you were."

Ewbank responded, "If we don't win a championship soon, it won't be his fault," and he was pointing to the new Jets quarterback in the pinkish sport coat and the dark trousers.

Namath was introduced as "the man of the hour, the man of the year," by Werblin, who said, "In Joe coming to us, we have delivered the No. 1 college football player to college fans, and he is the beginning of many championships in New York."

Namath, poised and smiling and not at all uncomfortable, said "It wasn't entirely the money. The Cards (St. Louis Cardinals) and Jets contracts were about the same. I leaned toward the Jets from the first time I talked with them. New York City is a fine city, Coach Ewbank a fine coach and Mr. Werblin a fine owner."

Bryant beamed, "Hearing that boy brag on his bosses, I know we taught him something."

"I'm too used to playing under fine coaches, like Coach Bryant," Namath said, and he beamed back.

Someone pressed Werblin for details. "Was a new car involved?" The Jets owner responded, "I think everything was involved."

There was much laughing, and shaking hands around, the photographers took more pictures, and the sun shone, and the skies sparkled, and the ocean rested, placid, blue and beautiful.

This was the day Joe Namath, who came from Pennsylvania but now belongs to Alabama for all time, struck it rich, and found himself once more back in headlines big and black.



For the Record

18. SCOREBOARD

For the man who was looking for the life story of Paul Bryant, like "Farmboy to Famous Coach," another detail or two. He likes steak next best to turnip greens and cornbread and buttermilk. Kids warm up to him quickly because he likes kids, and he's a doting grandfather-type. He enjoys fishing, and would play more golf if he had time, is an informed baseball fan, and is one of those delightful people who read every line on a Birmingham News sports page. He could have been a pro coach, but he wouldn't give in. He reads the Wall Street Journal, is director of a bank and an insurance company, among other things. His teams have won a great many football games, and that's what the next words are mostly about.

THERE has been no attempt here, nor will there be, to set forth a biography of Paul Bryant in the standard manner. This collection of words must contain some for the record, however, concerning the days before Bryant came finally to his finest years at the University of Alabama.

Does a birthdate matter? Paul William Bryant was born September 11, 1913, the 11th of 12 children of the Wilson Monroe Bryants. His father farmed, and it was a struggle down in Moro Bottoms near Kingsland, Ark.

Paul Bryant played high school football and basketball and courted his first sweethearts at nearby Fordyce, then

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went away to the University of Alabama, where he was a much better end than he now will admit.

Ask Bryant about his playing days and he says, "I was ordinary. I was very ordinary. In today's football I would be a second-string tackle, maybe. I didn't think so then, maybe. I sure do know it now."

But there is Red Drew, who coached Alabama's ends in that time and later was head coach. Ask him about Paul Bryant, two-year regular at end, and he says, "As far as all-around play, I suspect he was as good as any we have had. Defense was his long suit. He liked to get at them. He was a great blocker, and when we threw the ball to him, he'd catch it. Dixie Howell's main target was Don Hutson, but Bryant could do everything he needed to do."

Ask Mrs. Bryant and she demurs, "I don't know about the others. All I ever watched was Paul. Grantland Rice told me after the Rose Bowl game in 1935 that he was sure to make All-America the next year, but he broke his leg, and didn't."

The leg is a story. In the second game of 1935, against Mississippi State, Bryant, the senior end, came out with a broken leg in the first quarter, returned in the third quarter and finished the game. No one knew it was a break, but they knew the next week, and Tennessee was waiting in Knoxville. Bryant made the train trip with his leg in a cast, and on crutches, but he got the cast off, and he started, and he played until Alabama had the game safely in the bag.

An Atlanta sportswriter named Ralph McGill who later was to become much better known as a Page 1 columnist didn't believe it about the leg. He made a trip to Tuscaloosa to see for himself, was satisfied, and wrote quite a story. "It was just one little bone," Bryant remembers,

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and Drew counters, "Well, how many bones do you need for a broken leg?"

Teammates remember him as that rarest of player types, one who enjoyed practice. In the 1935 Rose Bowl which made Howell and Hutson famous, he logged more playing time than anyone on the squad.

Always, he was an ambitious, give-it-everything football player, the prototype of the coach he was to become. Frank Thomas saw this and knew this, and that's why he hired the young man as an assistant coach when he finished with his football playing in 1935 and needed a job more immediately than some because he had been married on June 2, 1935, to a campus beauty. Mary Harmon Bryant—to be perfectly, flatteringly frank—still is much prettier than most coeds you'll meet walking across a college campus.

Mae Martin Bryant, who became Mrs. Thomas McClellan when she grew up, was born March 15, 1936. Paul Bryant, Jr., was born Dec. 19, 1944 and the love and admiration of his wife and children for Paul William Bryant must be acknowledged as large factors in the success story related in these pages.

The first Tuscaloosa coaching years were good ones, but there was an itch in Bryant to be off and going, and that took him to Vanderbilt for two football seasons of teaching and learning under the gifted Red Sanders. World War Two called him to the Navy and kept him, then, from becoming head coach at Arkansas. Wars have a way of changing the courses of men who survive them, and so it was with Bryant.

Out of the Navy in 1945, he began his head-coaching career at the University of Maryland, and it is indicated that the time has come to resort to the statistical. It is not my feeling, as a writer about games, that statistics make

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absorbing reading. But to know Bryant and the years in which he has marched forward, fan or friend must at some point look at the scores.

Bryant's first game as a head coach, in 1945, was with little Guilford. He worried about that one even more, perhaps, than some far more significant and more difficult, but they'd never catch him over-confident. Not then. Not now.

So the Maryland Terrapins, coached by Paul Bryant, whipped Guilford, 60 to 6, and despite the uncertain caliber of the opposition it was a handsome beginning. Maryland had something, and Maryland was delighted when the year ended with its football team having won six games, lost only two, and tied one. The year before, Maryland football had been 1-7-1.

This was Maryland, 1945:

- 60—Guilford 6.
- 21—Richmond 0.
- 22—Merchant Marine Academy 6.
- 13—Virginia Tech 21.
- 13—West Virginia 13.
- 14—William and Mary 33.
- 38—Virginia Military 0.
- 19—Virginia 13.
- 19—South Carolina 13.

Bryant was at Kentucky as 1946 began and here he inherited a team which had won two, lost eight in its previous season.

The Wildcats gave the "rehabilitator" a 20 to 7 conquest of Mississippi, leading off, won six more, lost only to Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee, and the 7-3 record was the best at Kentucky since the 1929 team won six,

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lost one, tied one. No Kentucky team had won as many as seven since the 1912 Wildcats went seven-two.

Kentucky, 1946:

- 20—Mississippi 7.
- 26—Cincinnati 7.
- 70—Xavier 0.
- 13—Georgia 28.
- 10—Vanderbilt 7.
- 7—Alabama 21.
- 39—Michigan State 14.
- 35—Marquette 0.
- 13—West Virginia 0.
- 0—Tennessee 7.

It came out 7-3 again in 1947 for Bryant, a young man on the move, and Kentucky, and the Great Lakes Bowl sent for the Wildcats at the end of the year. They polished off Villanova, 24 to 14, in the first of four post-season games Kentucky would enjoy with Bryant.

Kentucky, 1947:

- 7—Mississippi 14.
- 20—Cincinnati 0.
- 20—Xavier 7.
- 26—Georgia 0.
- 14—Vanderbilt 0.
- 7—Michigan State 6.
- 0—Alabama 13.
- 15—West Virginia 6.
- 36—Evansville 0.
- 6—Tennessee 13.
- 24—Villanova 14 (Great Lakes Bowl)

No bowl men were knocking on the door after 1948, which began with a 48 to 7 triumph over Xavier and

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Kentucky, 1951:

- 72—Tennessee Tech 13.
- 6—Texas 7.
- 17—Mississippi 21.
- 7—Georgia Tech 13.
- 27—Mississippi State 0.
- 35—Villanova 13.
- 14—Florida 6.
- 32—Miami 0.
- 37—Tulane 0.
- 47—George Washington 13.
- 0—Tennessee 28
- 20—Texas Christian 7 (Cotton Bowl).

There was a slump to 5-4-2 in 1952. The Wildcats got close to Bob Neyland and Tennessee again, but this was a hill they couldn't climb. At that, the 14-14 tie with the Vols was a high spot, and a record was maintained, even in an off year. No Bryant team yet had batted below .500.

Kentucky, 1952:

- 6—Villanova 25.
- 13—Mississippi 13.
- 10—Texas A & M 7.
- 7—Louisiana State 34.
- 14—Mississippi State 27.
- 14—Cincinnati 6.
- 29—Miami 0.
- 27—Tulane 6.
- 27—Clemson 14.
- 14—Tennessee 14.
- 0—Florida 27.

The era was ending. It was 1953, and greener fields and new challenges were calling. This was Bryant's last

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lost one, tied one. No Kentucky team had won as many as seven since the 1912 Wildcats went seven-two.

Kentucky, 1946:

- 20—Mississippi 7.
- 26—Cincinnati 7.
- 70—Xavier 0.
- 13—Georgia 28.
- 10—Vanderbilt 7.
- 7—Alabama 21.
- 39—Michigan State 14.
- 35—Marquette 0.
- 13—West Virginia 0.
- 0—Tennessee 7.

It came out 7-3 again in 1947 for Bryant, a young man on the move, and Kentucky, and the Great Lakes Bowl sent for the Wildcats at the end of the year. They polished off Villanova, 24 to 14, in the first of four post-season games Kentucky would enjoy with Bryant.

Kentucky, 1947:

- 7—Mississippi 14.
- 20—Cincinnati 0.
- 20—Xavier 7.
- 26—Georgia 0.
- 14—Vanderbilt 0.
- 7—Michigan State 6.
- 0—Alabama 13.
- 15—West Virginia 6.
- 36—Evansville 0.
- 6—Tennessee 13.
- 24—Villanova 14 (Great Lakes Bowl)

No bowl men were knocking on the door after 1948, which began with a 48 to 7 triumph over Xavier and

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ended in 25 to 5 victory over Miami, because there was trouble in between. Kentucky was 5-3-2 for the season, but a scoreless tie with Tennessee, the ancient nemesis, helped to make it more palatable than might have been.

Kentucky, 1948:

- 48—Xavier 7.
- 7—Mississippi 20.
- 12—Georgia 35.
- 7—Vanderbilt 26.
- 25—Marquette 0.
- 28—Cincinnati 7.
- 13—Villanova 13.
- 34—Florida 15.
- 0—Tennessee 0.
- 25—Miami 5.

When 1949 led off with Kentucky running amok against Mississippi Southern, 71 to 7, Bryant's best-year-yet at Lexington was beginning, and the reward at the end was a trip to the Orange Bowl where Bryant taught himself a coaching lesson. The squad went early to Florida to prepare itself. Later, the coach would say, "I held another spring training," and he blamed himself for the arduous work which wore down his men. Santa Clara beat them, 21 to 13. Bryant bowl teams afterward relaxed and enjoyed themselves on a holiday. The system was productive.

Kentucky, 1949:

- 71—Mississippi Southern 7.
- 19—Louisiana State 0.
- 47—Mississippi 0.
- 25—Georgia 0.
- 44—The Citadel 0.
- 7—Southern Methodist 20.
- 14—Cincinnati 7.

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- 21—Xavier 7.
- 35—Florida 0.
- 0—Tennessee 6.
- 21—Miami 6.
- 13—Santa Clara 21 (Orange Bowl).

The best was yet to be. Kentucky polished off 10 in a row in 1950 before losing to Tennessee 7-0, but a stunning 13-7 upset of Oklahoma in the Sugar Bowl of Jan. 1, 1951, made Blue Grassers almost forget even Adolph Rupp's basketball for awhile. Bryant knew now that he had arrived. The victory over Bud Wilkinson told a lot of other people about it, too.

Kentucky, 1950:

- 25—North Texas State 0.
- 14—Louisiana State 0.
- 27—Mississippi 0.
- 40—Dayton 0.
- 41—Cincinnati 7.
- 34—Villanova 7.
- 28—Georgia Tech 14.
- 40—Florida 6.
- 48—Mississippi State 21.
- 83—North Dakota U. 0.
- 0—Tennessee 7.
- 13—Oklahoma 7 (Sugar Bowl)

Bryant took Kentucky to the Cotton Bowl after 1951 despite a 7-4 regular-season record. His team did most of its losing early, and it's better that way for bowl-ambitious ones, and when the Wildcats whipped Texas Christian, 20 to 7, in Dallas on New Year's Day, all of the losing was forgiven.

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Kentucky, 1951:

- 72—Tennessee Tech 13.
- 6—Texas 7.
- 17—Mississippi 21.
- 7—Georgia Tech 13.
- 27—Mississippi State 0.
- 35—Villanova 13.
- 14—Florida 6.
- 32—Miami 0.
- 37—Tulane 0.
- 47—George Washington 13.
- 0—Tennessee 28
- 20—Texas Christian 7 (Cotton Bowl).

There was a slump to 5-4-2 in 1952. The Wildcats got close to Bob Neyland and Tennessee again, but this was a hill they couldn't climb. At that, the 14-14 tie with the Vols was a high spot, and a record was maintained, even in an off year. No Bryant team yet had batted below .500.

Kentucky, 1952:

- 6—Villanova 25.
- 13—Mississippi 13.
- 10—Texas A & M 7.
- 7—Louisiana State 34.
- 14—Mississippi State 27.
- 14—Cincinnati 6.
- 29—Miami 0.
- 27—Tulane 6.
- 27—Clemson 14.
- 14—Tennessee 14.
- 0—Florida 27.

The era was ending. It was 1953, and greener fields and new challenges were calling. This was Bryant's last

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season at Kentucky, and his fans enjoyed a 7-2-1 performance. They enjoyed most the 27 to 21 win over Tennessee. At last, the Vols had been put down. Bryant headed for Texas A & M, leaving behind an eight-year record of 60 won, 23 lost, five tied, and there had been four bowl games.

Kentucky, 1953:

- 6—Texas A & M 7.
- 6—Mississippi 22.
- 26—Florida 13.
- 6—Louisiana State 6.
- 35—Mississippi State 13.
- 19—Villanova 0.
- 19—Rice 13.
- 40—Vanderbilt 14.
- 19—Memphis State 7.
- 27—Tennessee 21.

Some personal unhappiness with football's role at Kentucky and a tempting offer from Texas A & M dictated the Lexington to College Station, Tex., move. There was an offer from Minnesota, and it was more attractive financially, but Bryant had no hankering to take his family to a Minnesota winter.

The only losing season in all of his head-coaching years came upon Paul Bryant his first year at Texas A & M. This was an Aggie squad which was decimated by the demands of the first spring practice at Junction, Tex., but a foundation had been laid for the big winning that followed, and Bryant's "Junction Boys" earned themselves a place in the history of Texas A & M athletics.

Latter day Bryant followers, not familiar with how it was in 1954 at College Station, Tex., might have trouble

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believing, but this was the record, a 6-0 win over Georgia, all else defeat.

Texas A & M, 1954:

- 9—Texas Tech 41.
- 6—Oklahoma A & M 14.
- 6—Georgia 0.
- 7—Houston 10.
- 20—Texas Christian 21.
- 7—Baylor 20.
- 7—Arkansas 14.
- 3—Southern Methodist 6.
- 19—Rice 29.
- 13—Texas 22.

Close watchers saw, however, that in almost every game Texas A & M contended. Except for Texas Tech, no one pushed Bryant's dedicated young people around, and the "Junction Boys" proved many things in 1955, which brought seven wins, two losses, a tie, in drastic and dramatic reversal. They would not be losers under Bryant again.

A 21-0 loss to UCLA began the year and there was whimpering from wounded Aggie alumni, but then the fun began. It was a 7-2-1 year, and this was the best Texas A & M had known since 1943 which was 7-1-1. Suddenly it was popular to be an old Aggie again, and Bryant was the hero of heroes. Tall and strong, he looked like John Wayne in "West of the Pecos." He was perfect for a Texas school. Texas A & M, miles from anywhere, a lonely place where the wind howled across the plains, now had something to make it Texas-big once more. The something was Bryant.

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Texas A & M, 1955:

- 0—UCLA 21.
- 28—LSU 0.
- 21—Houston 3.
- 27—Nebraska 0.
- 19—TCU 16.
- 19—Baylor 7.
- 7—Arkansas 7.
- 13—SMU 2.
- 20—Rice 12.
- 6—Texas 21.

There was a Southwest Conference championship in 1956, although probation kept A & M from defending for the league in the Cotton Bowl. It was for a year, only, but the NCAA ruled that all players signed by over-enthusiastic Aggies should be released from their scholarships. That didn't hurt. Promptly, they all signed up all over again.

Bryant's friends charged that the rest of the league, startled by this brash newcomer, had ganged up on him. It might have been. At any rate, the coach of Texas A & M lost no friends, and he was too busy winning to waste a great deal of time worrying about his enemies. No man stands out front like a Bryant and finds himself universally loved. This, too, is part of the price for not coming in second.

Texas A & M, 1956:

- 19—Villanova 0.
- 9—Louisiana State 6.
- 40—Texas Tech 7.
- 14—Houston 14.
- 7—Texas Christian 6.
- 19—Baylor 13.

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- 27—Arkansas 0.
- 33—Southern Methodist 7.
- 21—Rice 7.
- 34—Texas 21.

The winning went right on into 1957. The Aggies had taken eight in a row before they got to Rice and lost by a point, 7-6; and Texas, which won, 9-7, while the rumors from Alabama grew louder. Bryant had accepted the coaching job at his alma mater before the Gator Bowl game, his last with the Aggies, and there was Tennessee, and the Vols won at Jacksonville, 3-0.

Bryant's Texas chapter was ended. In four years Texas A & M had started from scratch and won 25, lost 14 and tied two. It is worth noting again that nine of the 14 losses came in the first, rebuilding season.

Texas A & M, 1957:

- 21—Maryland 13.
- 21—Texas Tech 0.
- 28—Missouri 6.
- 28—Houston 6.
- 7—Texas Christian 0.
- 14—Baylor 0.
- 7—Arkansas 6.
- 19—Southern Methodist 6.
- 6—Rice 7.
- 7—Texas 9.
- 0—Tennessee 3 (Gator Bowl).

Now came Alabama. Now came the national champions; now came the years when Paul Bryant's football would put his old school on top of the world and stamp him definitely, finally as one of the great ones, perhaps the greatest of his time, the Bryant who was front and center in a thousand stories that demanded writing.

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In the three years preceding Bryant's return to Tuscaloosa, Alabama football had produced only four winning games. Alabama men, women and children had agonized through 24 defeats and two ties. This wasn't the Alabama they had known and the nation had applauded. This didn't look like Alabama, or sound like Alabama, or feel like Alabama.

So Bryant set out, and he was demanding; only the completely willing were wanted; others need not apply. It wasn't an easy beginning, but the handwriting on the wall appeared early.

The 1958 season was 5-4-1, and a big step forward, but there would be no more like that in the seven years of the Bear.

Alabama, 1958:

- 3—Louisiana State 13.
- 0—Vanderbilt 0.
- 29—Furman 6.
- 7—Tennessee 14.
- 9—Mississippi State 7.
- 12—Georgia 0.
- 7—Tulane 13.
- 17—Georgia Tech 8.
- 14—Memphis State 0.
- 8—Auburn 14.

There was a sophomore quarterback named Pat Trammell in 1959, and a sophomore tackle, Billy Neighbors, who would become All-American when they were seniors, and the new boys were about to discover the great pleasure which could be drawn from Saturday afternoons in autumn. This involves winning football games. They won seven, lost only one, tied two, went to the Liberty Bowl. At that Philadelphia game Penn State won 7-0 but

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tongue never before had known the sweetness of a soft drink in a bottle.

And there's something of the gawky teen-age boy who took his shoes, his only, good, new shoes and had cleats nailed on them so that he could play football on the Fordyce High School football team.

The farm where he grew up, down in what's called the Moro Bottoms is here, and most of all the angry ambition which drove Paul Bryant all the way which would not let him be still, which insisted that only the first place would do.

Surely the odds were a million to one 40 years ago that Bryant would have been here tonight on this stage, but he made it, and plainly he is proud that he did.

Now the place where it all began has put his name on the honor roll of those who have meant most to Arkansas. This is select company.

He left here, thumbing a ride. He came back in a Cadillac. That's sort of the story, a dream-come-true one for Paul William Bryant, the great American success story complete with happy ending.

The lady who traveled the hard miles by his side, Mary Harmon Bryant, gracious and beautiful, will be one of a throng of 600 (all the house will hold) who come to see the deed done tonight.

Close friends from Tuscaloosa, Jimmy Hinton and Mrs. Hinton, Niel Morgan and Mrs. Morgan, will applaud, too, and Sam Bailey, Alabama assistant head coach, and Mrs. Bailey.

Bryant's name goes alongside such other illustrious sons of Arkansas as Bill Dickey, Jim Lee Howell, John Barnhill, Don Hutson, Travis Jackson, Lon Warneke, Paul Runyan, Schoolboy Rowe, Ray Winder, Clyde Scott, Dutch Harrison and George Kell.

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Alabama, 1958:

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- 0—Vanderbilt 0.
- 29—Furman 6.
- 7—Tennessee 14.
- 9—Mississippi State 7.
- 12—Georgia 0.
- 7—Tulane 13.
- 17—Georgia Tech 8.
- 14—Memphis State 0.
- 8—Auburn 14.

There was a sophomore quarterback named Pat Trammell in 1959, and a sophomore tackle, Billy Neighbors, who would become All-American when they were seniors, and the new boys were about to discover the great pleasure which could be drawn from Saturday afternoons in autumn. This involves winning football games. They won seven, lost only one, tied two, went to the Liberty Bowl. At that Philadelphia game Penn State won 7-0 but

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the Crimson Tide was back in the bowl business. There it would stay and stay.

More important to the old grads was the 10 to 0 conquest of Auburn in the last game of the season. The ancient enemy from across-state had taken five in a row, but now the tide had turned, as it were.

Alabama, 1959:

- 3—Georgia 17.
- 3—Houston 0.
- 7—Vanderbilt 7.
- 13—Chattanooga 0.
- 7—Tennessee 7.
- 10—Mississippi State 0.
- 19—Tulane 7.
- 9—Georgia Tech 7.
- 14—Memphis State 7.
- 10—Auburn 0.
- 0—Penn State 7 (Liberty Bowl).

A trend had been established. In 1960 Alabama won eight, lost one and played a 3-3 Bluebonnet Bowl tie with Texas, and the Texas game turned up a new headliner, linebacker Lee Roy Jordan from Excel, Ala., a rawboned country boy who would become All-America, too, the best at his position the Crimson Tide had ever known.

Alabama, 1960:

- 21—Georgia 6.
- 6—Tulane 6.
- 21—Vanderbilt 0.
- 7—Tennessee 20.
- 14—Houston 0.
- 7—Mississippi State 0.
- 51—Furman 0.
- 16—Georgia Tech 15.

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34—Tampa 6.

3—Auburn 0.

3—Texas 3 (Bluebonnet Bowl).

There were scoreboards still to be captured. Bryant and Alabama took them all in 1961. The team was a national champion, its coach was "Coach of the Year" for the nation, and there was icing in the Sugar Bowl: Alabama 10, Arkansas 3, and Mike Fracchia, the fullback, running like All-America, though a knee injury would stop him the next spring. Neighbors and Trammell, seniors, and Jordan, the junior, hit the honors jackpot, and headlines went with them. These were the most honored. They had not lacked for help, and Bryant was using an old formula. "Defense wins" is a fact of life he learned long ago. Eleven opponents scored 25 points on the national champions. They did not give up a single point in their last five games. These were shutout pitchers.

Alabama, 1961:

32—Georgia 6.

9—Tulane 0.

35—Vanderbilt 6.

26—North Carolina State 7.

34—Tennessee 3.

17—Houston 0.

24—Mississippi State 0.

66—Richmond 0.

10—Georgia Tech 0.

34—Auburn 0.

10—Arkansas 3 (Sugar Bowl).

Just when some exuberant Alabama rooters were becoming convinced that their team probably would not lose again, ever, the Crimson Tide came upon Georgia Tech in November of 1962, and Lady Luck, Dame For-

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tune, or whoever controls football destinies, was caught looking the other way. Tech won, 7 to 6, but Alabama lost to no others and its sophomore quarterback Joe Namath and his great receiver Richard Williamson, Cotton Clark, who fell in love with end zones, and Lee Roy Jordan went on to the Orange Bowl where Oklahoma was bombed, 17 to 0.

Alabama, 1962:

- 35—Georgia 0.
- 44—Tulane 6.
- 17—Vanderbilt 7.
- 14—Houston 3.
- 27—Tennessee 7.
- 35—Tulsa 6.
- 20—Mississippi State 0.
- 36—Miami 3.
- 6—Georgia Tech 7.
- 38—Auburn 0.
- 17—Oklahoma 0 (Orange Bowl).

You might call 1963 an "off year." Alabama lost two games, and this was more than Alabama had lost since 1958. Florida, by four points, Auburn by two, were the difference, and Alabama's acceptance of a Sugar Bowl invitation to meet Mississippi looked some places like a horrible blunder. Steve Sloan, quarterbacking for the disciplined Namath, and Tim Davis, who kicked four field goals, and a raging Alabama defense upset Ole Miss, 12 to 7.

Alabama, 1963:

- 32—Georgia 7.
- 28—Tulane 0.
- 21—Vanderbilt 6.
- 6—Florida 10.
- 35—Tennessee 0.

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- 21—Houston 13.
- 20—Mississippi State 19.
- 27—Georgia Tech 11.
- 8—Auburn 10.
- 17—Miami 12.
- 12—Mississippi 7 (Sugar Bowl).

If anyone suspected that Alabama was on the verge of another national championship as 1964 began, he wasn't making loud noises about it. But the come-from-behind champions of Crimson Tide history wouldn't stop short of No. 1. They struggled and squeaked and clawed and fought and got there.

Offense and defense, this often outweighed, not very fast football team kept reaching for the needful and producing it in the hour of most painful crisis. Four times in its last five games, the Tide came from behind to win. Here was a team that could be knocked down. But it was a team which always got up again. It was a team which often was behind but never seemed to mind.

"My favorite team" Bryant called this one at the end of a season of never-ending shuffling of personnel because of injuries that dogged the Tide's trail. These boys were so human, so anything but overpowering, they were downright lovable chaps. All-America pickers had difficulty. Namath was hurt half the year, and Sloan picked them up at quarterback. Guard Wayne Freeman and Tackle Dan Kearley made some selections, but there was a different hero every week, and some of them had not been heard from before. There was poise on the "favorite" team (no one said "greatest team") and there was zest and spectacular unwillingness to be beaten.

The Orange Bowl, wrapping it up on the night of Jan. 1, was a 21-17 loss to Texas which missed by inches

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being the most magnificent comeback of them all. Crippled Joe Namath led his team heartbreakingly close.

Alabama, 1964:

- 31—Georgia 3.
- 36—Tulane 6.
- 24—Vanderbilt 0.
- 21—North Carolina State 0.
- 19—Tennessee 8.
- 17—Florida 14.
- 23—Mississippi State 6.
- 17—Louisiana State 9.
- 24—Georgia Tech 7.
- 21—Auburn 14.
- 17—Texas 21 (Orange Bowl).

You have read the record of seven years of Alabama coaching, 60 wins, 11 losses, 5 ties. Again, consider that four of the 11 defeats were in Bryant's first year back, the getting-the-feet-on-the-ground year. In the six seasons after, Alabama lost only five games, won two national championships.

"The players do it," Bryant has said over and over again, but the loyal following looks at the record of before and after and will not concede that it's all in the talent. The loyal following thinks this abundance surely will be theirs to delight in until the end of Bryant's coaching time.

This may, or may not be. Footballs are constructed for odd bounces.

What seems reasonably certain is that neither the coach nor the university which honors him in its own time by calling its dormitory for athletes "Paul Bryant Hall" can put together a more brilliant seven years than the span which began in 1958, climaxing an entirely unlikely story that had its beginnings in an unlikely place called Moro Bottoms, in Arkansas.

19. SEVEN TO REMEMBER

For a football writer looking for something extra, and for all fans of Paul Bryant and the Alabama football teams he coached, the series with Georgia Tech was a continuing delight; for fans, because Bryant's teams, often underdogs, won six of seven; for the writer, because they kept on turning up improbably dramatic results. The report of the Bryant-Bobby Dodd series belongs here because there has not been another like it, nor is there likely to be. They played the last game in 1964.

IT WAS in 1958, Grant Field, Atlanta, and a typewriter could tingle: "Alabama football is back. Not next week. Not next month. Not next year. Now. Bear Bryant's Crimson Tide told 44,000 and the world Saturday with an unbelievable 17 to 8 conquest that turned Georgia Tech's homecoming into a nightmare afternoon."

Legion Field, Birmingham, 1959, and what happened, as it was written: "Through the cold, wet cavern that was Legion Field, Alabama's Crimson Tide came marching again toward football's high places Saturday afternoon. Unranked, largely unnoticed, but undefeated since a season-beginning loss to Georgia, the fierce red shirts who play for Bear Bryant struck Georgia Tech down, 9 to 7."

And 1960, Grant Field: "The score was 16 to 15. Numbers in lights on a scoreboard. Flick a switch. They're gone. But Alabama put them there Saturday at Grant

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Field and left them flaming for history. Wildly, unbelievably, impossibly, magnificently, the Crimson Tide came storming back from deep despair on this beautiful autumn afternoon, and left Georgia Tech stunned and beaten."

1961, Legion Field: "Alabama surrounded Georgia Tech with the nation's fiercest football defense Saturday afternoon and drove on, last of the nation's unbeaten. No. 9 in an all-winning Crimson Tide run through '61 came 10 to 0, decisively, for more than 53,000 to see at Legion Field. Other teams might falter. Not this one."

There had to come a day and that was 1962, Grant Field: "Proudly, as a champion, Alabama met defeat this gray Saturday at old Grant Field. The Tide lost, 7-6. Georgia Tech reached up and got a football giant and brought that giant to earth."

But, 1963, Legion Field: "The football team of the University of Alabama defeated the football team of the Georgia Institute of Technology, 27 to 11, Saturday, Nov. 16, at Legion Field. And 54,000 saw the boys play under skies of blue and a sun that smiled and a wind that blew gently from the south."

Then 1964, end of the Alabama-Tech series, at Atlanta for the finish: "Joe Namath fired the most explosive 80 seconds in all the history of Alabama football Saturday afternoon at Grant Field, and the most amazing football team in all the history of Paul Bryant went mopping up from there to the sweetest victory of them all. It was Alabama 24, Georgia Tech 7 when the clock ran down on the last game of the old series, and the sun-dappled scene of many happier Tech times was covered with Alabama superlatives, overwhelming evidence of the greatness of the Crimson Tide of 1964."

Seven football games, and no football series played by

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Alabama in Paul Bryant's finest years tells the story of the man and the team as well as this one.

Here was Bryant at his very best, winning six times, losing once (by a single point), and each of the victories and even the defeat carried the special trademark of the coach who came in his time to be one of those living legend types.

These seven didn't deter writing men either, for here were enough dramatics to last a lifetime, done up in one neat package. The difficulty, if any, was in doing justice to them, but a newspaper man at football games discovers ultimately that home-team fans delight in anything he writes if the home team wins. He's not such a much if the home team loses.

There was Bryant the opportunist operating in 1958.

Georgia Tech was favored by two touchdowns over the raggle-taggle collection of athletes the new Alabama coach had moulded into his first team. Of talent there was a scarcity, but these had survived the demanding first days of the Bryant regime. They would play, and play, and play.

Most Georgia Tech partisans approached the November Saturday of the Alabama game wondering which bowl awaited them, whether to get reservations on the beach or downtown.

But Tech was destined to make some mistakes. And Alabama had been taught what to do about those mistakes.

The game was less than four minutes old when the upstart Crimson Tide went ahead 7-0 on a plunge by Bobby Jackson, a reclaimed quarterback. This came about when end Baxter Booth recovered a fumble on Tech's 24.

Five minutes later Duff Morrison intercepted a Tech pass and ran from his 48 to the Tech 15. The Yellow Jackets braced. Pete Reaves, who had kicked point after

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the first touchdown, stuck a field goal in from the 19, and the Tide led 10-0.

In three minutes more Jackson was going five wide at left end, into the end zone, after linebacker Butch Frank had leaped on a Tech fumble at the 22. Reaves kicked again, and it was up to the Jackets to catch up. They couldn't.

Sports departments over the nation was shocked when the first period score came Alabama 17, Georgia Tech 0. And now the Tide fought a fierce delaying action, yielding only a touchdown in the third quarter and nothing more.

The 1959 production found Bryant again getting the most from the least. Tech came to Birmingham figuring to win, but in this, the second year of the Bear, they failed.

There was wind and rain and a quick Georgia Tech touchdown which came after an Alabama fumble on the game-opening kickoff.

The Crimson Tide wasn't accepting an early defeat, and drove back 51 yards for a touchdown of its own. Marlin Dyess, who might have weighed 140 pounds, scooted 10 yards around end for it. Gary O'Steen tried to run a two-point conversion but didn't make it and the lead still belonged to the Engineers.

They lost it, for good, eight minutes into the second quarter when Fred Sington banged a field goal home from the 33.

The last half was a story of Tech frustration, but Bryant's football teams have not made a habit of falling behind once they've gone ahead. This one didn't.

At halftime in 1960 Georgia Tech was running away with a 15 to 0 game. It was a rout and the second half surely would serve only to make it worse. Tech men wore

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happy smiles. The day was chill, but they were warm when intermission came.

Alabama had made one first down, on the last play of the half, but a man looking through field glasses to the Tide side of the field was amazed as Bryant and his men went loping in at intermission. They didn't look like they were beaten. They weren't, as it developed. This Crimson Tide would not panic because its coach didn't know the word. He was poised, perhaps even sure.

Pat Trammell quarterbacked Alabama to a touchdown in the second half and Bobby Skelton got another together. Then, at last, hurrying against the clock and behind 15-13, the Crimson Tide had one last shot to fire.

Skelton had gotten the Tide to the Tech 14, and rushed his men into line. He knelt to set the ball down for a field goal attempt, and Richard O'Dell, a big end from Lincoln, Ala., who had never kicked at a field goal in his college life, swung his foot forward.

The ball was up, wobbly, and seemed to hang in the air. Then it was tumbling down toward the crossbar. Did it? Didn't it?

There was no time left when the upraised hands of referee Johnny Lynch told the crowd that Alabama had done it again. The kick was good.

"I didn't tell them anything much at the half," Bryant said. "I thought they had been playing pretty well if they would straighten out a few things here and there. They straightened them out, didn't they?"

Yes, they did. And as things developed, O'Dell never kicked at another field goal.

Alabama was driving toward a national championship when Georgia Tech came to Legion Field in 1961, and Bryant, the master of defense, sent forth Lee Roy Jordan and his muscular friends.

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Georgia Tech gained 30 yards rushing, 66 passing, while Alabama's Mike Fracchia was hammering out a 16-yard touchdown in the second quarter and Tim Davis was kicking a 32-yard field goal. Ten points proved more than ample.

Tech was never in this game and Bryant, never short on praise when he saw praise due, summed up on his stout-hearted, dedicated young men, "They convinced me today they are a great team."

This was the Saturday of the "Graning-Holt incident," in which the Tech halfback was injured by the Alabama linebacker, an incident finally magnified out of all proportion. Here, unfortunately, was the beginning of the end of the series. Now was found a starting basis for abandoning a game which was one of the tougher ones Tech wished to abandon to get into a lighter schedule. Bobby Dodd, the coach, never gave any reason other than this. It was enough. Holt-Graning needn't have been involved.

Georgia Tech claimed its win in 1962. Alabama fans cheered Bryant's decision to go for two points six minutes from the end after Cotton Clark had scored a touchdown. Mike McNames had gotten six points for Tech in the second quarter and Billy Lothridge had place-kicked a seventh.

The Tide had won 19 in a row, was first in the nation, king of U.S. football for two years. Jack Hurlbut ran for two and victory; no one was settling for a tie. Hurlbut was stopped short.

Late, Alabama had one last chance after the badly bruised sophomore star Joe Namath had run his team down close. An interception killed the chance and Tech joy was boundless; 7 to 6 was as good as 50 to 0. Bryant had gambled and lost. The gambler is part of his football, too.

SEVEN TO REMEMBER

The last time in Birmingham was 1963, and Raymond Ogden got it going with a handsome 43-yard touchdown run for the Crimson Tide. Billy Lothridge kicked a field goal for Tech, then Benny Nelson eclipsed it with a second Tide touchdown that meant 14 to 3 at the half.

Tech fought up to 11-14 in the third quarter, but was stopped on the Alabama 25 five minutes into the fourth quarter, and that was that.

Bryant's Tide made it gaudy (27-11) with two late touchdowns and the most decisive margin up to that time in the Bryant-Dodd series. Sixteen points amounted to a stampede, and it was a win the coach and his men wanted very much.

Then was 1964, the end, and this came out as one of the finest hours for perhaps the greatest quarterback who ever put on the red shirt of Alabama.

The teams were locked in a scoreless tie when Namath, hobbling on the knee hurt earlier in the season, came to work with only a minute, 47 seconds remaining in the first half.

What happened then couldn't happen. But it did.

In 29 seconds Namath had Alabama ahead 7-0. In 51 seconds more, the scoreboard gleamed with 14 for the undefeated, untied Orange Bowl-bound Crimson Tide.

Namath had passed for one touchdown, set up another after an onside kickoff, and the rest of the day was happy ease for Alabama. It was 24 to 0 before the Yellow Jackets scored in the closing minutes and 24 to 7 wrapped it up beautifully anyway.

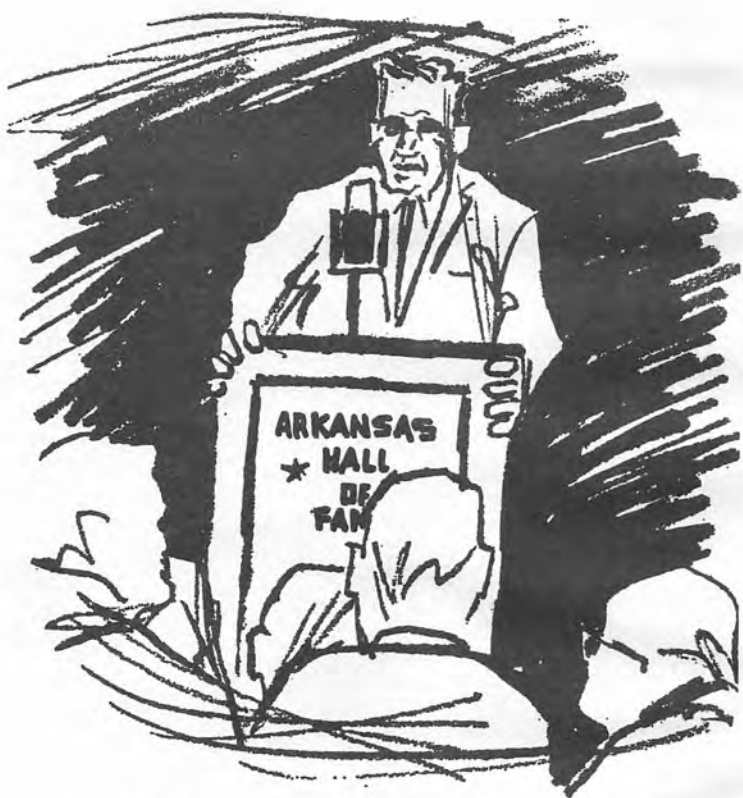
Seven games, six of them Alabama victories. Crimson Tide domination, complete, of a series which had belonged to Georgia Tech before Bryant moved in at Tuscaloosa and turned the whole shebang upside down.

The Tech series is no exception, but typical of the way

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Tide fortunes went in this, the truly golden era of Alabama football, against every team with which Bryant was involved at any length.

As Tech was mastered with guile and poise, dedication and determination, so were all the rest. And that's how Alabama won national championships in 1961 and 1964, and started in 1959 playing a bowl game every year as if it were a regularly scheduled game.



Return of the Native

20. A MILLION TO ONE

Later, Paul Bryant would say when he spoke before a joint assembly of the Alabama Legislature, "I am an Alabamian by choice." He expressed it more forcefully to friends, "Arkansas is not my home. Alabama is. Alabama is where I've bought my cemetery lot." But the state of his birth wanted to join in all the applause in January, 1965, for the success of Bryant at Alabama. And that took him back to Little Rock for an Arkansas Hall of Fame dinner, and a world of remembering. What were the odds that the poor farm boy would have made this party? I estimated a million to one. They might have been higher, but here he was, and the occasion needed recording. It was, in these words:

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Jan. 21—The State of Arkansas takes time out from beating on its chest and shouting, "We're No. 1" tonight to honor the coach of the football team which was REALLY No. 1 in 1964.

Occasion is the seventh annual Arkansas Hall of Fame dinner. There are four inductees, but the native son they note the most is Paul Bryant of Alabama.

It is a tribute which touches places deep inside this man that are hidden from most who know him, and admire him, and look lovingly on his Crimson Tide handiwork.

This finds the little boy, maybe 10, who found one of life's greatest moments the day his daddy said, "Come on in the store, son, and let's have a soda pop," because his

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tongue never before had known the sweetness of a soft drink in a bottle.

And there's something of the gawky teen-age boy who took his shoes, his only, good, new shoes and had cleats nailed on them so that he could play football on the Fordyce High School football team.

The farm where he grew up, down in what's called the Moro Bottoms is here, and most of all the angry ambition which drove Paul Bryant all the way which would not let him be still, which insisted that only the first place would do.

Surely the odds were a million to one 40 years ago that Bryant would have been here tonight on this stage, but he made it, and plainly he is proud that he did.

Now the place where it all began has put his name on the honor roll of those who have meant most to Arkansas. This is select company.

He left here, thumbing a ride. He came back in a Cadillac. That's sort of the story, a dream-come-true one for Paul William Bryant, the great American success story complete with happy ending.

The lady who traveled the hard miles by his side, Mary Harmon Bryant, gracious and beautiful, will be one of a throng of 600 (all the house will hold) who come to see the deed done tonight.

Close friends from Tuscaloosa, Jimmy Hinton and Mrs. Hinton, Niel Morgan and Mrs. Morgan, will applaud, too, and Sam Bailey, Alabama assistant head coach, and Mrs. Bailey.

Bryant's name goes alongside such other illustrious sons of Arkansas as Bill Dickey, Jim Lee Howell, John Barnhill, Don Hutson, Travis Jackson, Lon Warneke, Paul Runyan, Schoolboy Rowe, Ray Winder, Clyde Scott, Dutch Harrison and George Kell.

A MILLION TO ONE

His fellow inductees tonight are Tom Murphy, 1933 Arkansas quarterback; Shorty Carpenter, Arkansas basketball All-American of 1942, and Nick Carter, Ouachita College quarterback of 1904.

Joe Garagiola, the broadcaster, is master of ceremonies for the Hall of Fame dinner for the seventh year. Gov. Orval Faubus will return from a Washington mission early in order to attend.

Frank Broyles, coach of the Arkansas team, which plucked off some post-season awards after Alabama had taken the 1964 national championship in both major wire-service votes, will fly in from Fayetteville to attend.

Bryant, aware of the intenseness of support for the Razorbacks in these parts, is prepared to face it.

"I will kill them with kindness," Alabama's coach said. "I will tell them how great I think Arkansas is, and Coach Broyles is, and everybody."

"Everybody," on the other hand, is happy to tell the farmboy who made it big how great Arkansas thinks he is.

Dinner at 8 is anticipated.

21. BEAR RESEARCH

Then there was the matter of the nickname. Through all the years Paul Bryant grinned and changed the subject when someone asked him, "Why did they call you Bear?" And the yarn that he had wrestled a bear and become Bear Bryant forevermore could not be pinned down. Back in Arkansas, where all his kinfolks lived, there was opportunity for firsthand research. It was discovered that the kinfolks liked to talk about their famous kinsman as much as other folks, and that he really and truly did wrestle the bear, though the outcome of the match remains lost in history. Accounts are conflicting.

JIM BENTON, who later would become a great pass-catcher at Arkansas and in the pro leagues was there, and he saw it.

Paul Bryant's first cousin Collins Kilgore thinks that he went, too, but Edith Kilgore, his wife, says Collins is mistaken and got it all mixed up because it was such a long time ago. A bunch of the other Kilgores went, but somebody had to stay and mind the little hotel they ran in Fordyce, Ark. That was Collins.

Jack Bryant didn't go into town from the farm out at Moro Bottoms, but he was at home in the afternoon when his youngest brother came to get some old overalls and tell his daddy what he was up to. His daddy laughed at him.

Details differ now when they tell the story and some-

body will say, "This is the way it was," and somebody else brings him up short and says, "No, you got that wrong. What really happened was . . ."

Well, what really and truly happened; what is fact and not fiction, what may now be removed from the category of suspected legend growing with the years, and reported as absolute truth is this. . . .

Paul Bryant, Arkansas Hall of Famer, brilliant football coach, and all that, is called Bear just like they've been saying because once he climbed in a ring and he rassled a bear.

Ike Murry, who'd cut off an arm and give it to Paul Bryant if Paul asked for it, insists, laughing, "It was a mangy, little old bear. It's a disgrace for a man to get famous over tangling with something like that. Bear ought to be ashamed."

An old Negro friend of the family who watched Paul Bryant grow up insists that the bear was 10 feet tall, at least, and the meanest bear that ever got muzzled outside of the woods.

Get the idea?

There are some who say Paul was only 10 years old, and some say about 12 and some say it had to be he was 14 because he had moved into town and was learning how to play football at Fordyce High School.

No matter. All are agreed, Bryant kinfolk and friends who gathered together around the Arkansas Hall of Fame induction of the most illustrious of their clan that the Lyric Theatre in Fordyce was packed that night. A Mr. Smith owned the Lyric.

It would have been in 1927 or 1928 or thereabouts, and the extra added attraction was this man who had a bear and he would pay five dollars to anybody who could

BEAR RESEARCH

get in the ring and stay with him two minutes, or maybe it was three, or five.

Some of the boys got to kidding among one another and in a while Paul Bryant was saying, "I'll rassle him." He wasn't the backing down kind, either. They knew old Paul meant it.

The word spread through town faster than you could say Paul William Bryant, almost, and when the picture show opened that night, Mr. Smith had more folks in it than he ever had seen before. They came from all around. Never had the Lyric boxoffice been so busy.

The ring was set up on the stage in front of the screen, and when the bear man called for volunteers, here came Paul, with some old overalls on, marching up to the stage, a big, strong sort of early-grown boy. Presently battle commenced.

There are three versions now as to what transpired which must be recorded by a seeker after the facts, and nothing but.

Some say that they went at it hot and heavy for a minute or two, and then the bear's muzzle came off, and the man who owned the bear got scared and stopped the match.

Others are positive that it was about even and the man managed to get the muzzle off some way or other because he could tell that his bear was going to cost him five dollars, but that the brave boy wouldn't stop because the bear wasn't muzzled, and went right on and just about killed the bear.

And then there's the one that a few old cronies tell, laughing until they about bust, and you don't know whether they're joking or not, but you're left suspicious.

They say the boy went up, the bear came at him, the bear's muzzle came off, and the boy, being nobody's

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dummy, then or now, backed off the stage and out the door and ran all the way home.

The exact truth will never be known, sadly, because too many who were witnesses can't get together on the night many years ago at the Lyric Theater in Fordyce.

Bear Bryant laughs and changes the subject when you explore this chapter from his storied past.

Jack Bryant says, "I don't know whether or not he got his five dollars. I can't remember."

Jim Benton says, "It was such a long time ago, but I know this. That man rassled that bear."

And they have called him Bear Bryant from that day to this.

22. SOUVENIRS

Some of the stories could be repeated. Some really didn't need reprinting, for old friends tell stories like that on one another when they get together after long absences, and look back to the earlier time. Paul Bryant says he never forgave Ike Murry for depriving him of a touchdown which would have pleased a young lady in Fordyce, Ark., long ago. But Bryant's trip to the Arkansas Hall of Fame was a laughing time. Herewith, one of the laughs, and other souvenirs from the days before Paul Bryant made it bigger than any of them there might have dreamed, perhaps.

IKE MURRY was the center and Paul Bryant was a tackle for Fordyce High School and old Fordyce was beating the tar out of Warren that day.

Bryant, you know. Murry grew up to be attorney general of the State of Arkansas, and made the speech which put Bryant in the Arkansas Hall of Fame. They're friends.

It was a little different back there, back then, which might have been 1928 or might have been 1929. The dates grow dim as they go away.

There was a young lady who later would become Mrs. Ike Murry. She had two suitors. The center for Fordyce and the tackle were rivals for this fair hand. There was a coolness.

It grew cooler in the huddle where the Fordyce quarterback announced to his friends. "Let's let old Bear score

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a touchdown." Fordyce led 58 to 0, two minutes to play, the football on the Warren 2-yard line.

The young Bryant liked the touchdown deal. The young Murry didn't care for it at all. "Oh, no you don't," he said. "That guy's not scoring any touchdowns."

The quarterback ordered silence, like the coach had shown him to do, sent a back up to play tackle, sent Bryant to the backfield, lined his team up and got set to go. It's possible that he didn't hear Murry's last angry word to the tackle turned tailback as he headed to his post. "If you score," Ike Murry told Paul Bryant, "you'll be the first guy who ever did score without the football."

Murry leaned over the ball, wrapped his fingers around it. Bryant waited with outstretched hands for his moment of glory. Anyone knows that young ladies like young men who score touchdowns better than those who don't.

But it never came about. The rebellious center snapped the ball 10 feet over the head of the one who would score. They finally tracked it down at the 40-yard line.

Murry and Bryant shared the story and everybody around Little Rock had a Paul Bryant story to tell.

Pay your money. Take your choice. Everybody who didn't know Alabama's coach "back when" knew someone who had. The legends grow with age and some of them become like most stories heard after 11 at night. You can't print them.

Bill Dickey, the New York Yankee immortal who was one of Arkansas' first Hall of Famers in 1959, might have had the best one, and this goes back to the time in 1941 when Bryant, an assistant coach at Vanderbilt, would have become head coach at Arkansas if Pearl Harbor Day hadn't come up on the calendar.

Bryant, assistant coach at Alabama (salary \$1,250 yearly), had become a friend of the Dickey family before

SOUVENIRS

he moved to Vanderbilt as an assistant. There came a day when the Arkansas head-coaching job was open, and Bill Dickey, home from the World Series, had a call.

"I know I can do it, Bill," he said, "I want that job."

It's all Dickey's from here:

"I didn't know a thing about the head football coaching job at Arkansas, or anybody there, but I did know the governor, Homer Adkins, and I was a close friend of Guy Freeling, his right hand man.

"So I told Bear, 'Come on. We'll see what we can do.'

"So he came and Freeling took us to see the governor, and in a day or so, we hadn't heard anything so Bear said, 'Let's go see him again.'

"I think we went every day for 10 days to see the governor. He got to know us better than anybody. Then, finally, it was all squared away.

"The next day was Pearl Harbor. So that was the end of that. Bear enlisted, but I knew he was going somewhere someday. I knew when he set his mind to do something, he was going to do it one way or another. Whoever heard of going to see the governor 10 days in a row?

"And you know something," said the ex-Yankee who quit with enough money to spend all his time hunting birds if birds were in season all the time, "I don't guess I've seen him more than four times from then to now. He did all right, didn't he? I knew."

They were remembering another time when Bryant might have been a Razorback head coach, too. That was the year before he left Kentucky to go to Texas A & M.

One of those who was there told this one, "We had it all lined up, and he was going to get paid mighty well. So Bryant went back to Kentucky to tell them and they got up every influential man in the state, the governor and

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

everybody, and they put the heat on him, and he stayed for two more years, then he left.

"You know why he left, don't you. They had a testimonial dinner for Adolph Rupp and gave him a car, and they gave Bryant a cigarette lighter."

This was a laughing night, the night before his home state paid high honor to the farm boy who stood before his old friends honored as one of the greatest of all-time in the football coaching profession.

Ike Murry stalled a touchdown long ago. But no one ever stopped Paul Bryant for long, anywhere, any time.

23. A PRIVATE MATTER

Show me the man who never shed an honest tear, whose heart never filled and overflowed, who never came to a moment and found the sweetness of it and the sadness of it almost too much to bear, and you'll have found one who is something less than mortal human being. Paul Bryant's eyes were wet, and suddenly his voice wouldn't obey him, the night in January, 1965, when he stood to say "Thank you" to the Arkansas people who honored him. Bryant's eyes weren't the only misty ones there. And he tried to apologize later. There was no need.

JOE GARAGIOLA, the master of ceremonies, had been funny and funny some more. Joe is a very sharp fellow, which is why the New York Yankees pay him \$75,000 to talk about them on television in the summer.

All the people who are called honored guests had been introduced, and three Arkansas sports heroes had been properly installed in the Arkansas Hall of Fame, with speeches and with applause. There was an Arkansas quarterback, and an Arkansas basketball player and quarterback from the long-ago of Ouachita College. The night had gone on overtime, but no one stirred in the banquet hall full to overflowing.

Now was the time, and this is why most of them had come. Now before them, introduced by his old friend Ike Murry suddenly turned serious and laughing not at

all, was the farm boy from Moro Bottoms who became the famous football coach.

Here stood Bear Bryant, toughest guy in the world, and if you don't think he'd fight you to win at anything, ask them back in Fordyce where he played.

John Crow, in from Pine Bluff, waited for the words. So did Bill Dickey, Tim McCarver, Lon Warneke, Clyde Scott, Mel McGaha, Jim Benton, Frank Broyles, big names in games. Mary Harmon Bryant waited and brothers, cousins, all his kin; and Sam Bailey and Mildred, Jimmy Hinton and Jean, Niel Morgan and Mary, and Charley Thornton, the publicity man.

Bryant congratulated Broyles and the Arkansas football team, tried a joke for size, looked down at the piece of paper he'd laid before him, looked out across his audience to a time which might have been a million years ago.

(Later, he'd say, "I think maybe I got to thinking about Mama and that old peddling wagon. I don't know what happened.")

"I'm thankful," he said, "I have more to be thankful for than anybody in the world." Then the words stopped. The brain commanded. The voice would not obey, and Paul Bryant's eyes were brimming.

The toughest guy in the world stood before friends and home-folks and kinfolks, and he had a speech to make, and couldn't make it because he was crying. How long did he wait? How do you know? Ten seconds, 30, 60? Who clocks the time a man's heart has taken from him?

Finally, Arkansas Hall of Famer Paul Bryant, spoke again, slowly, deliberately, emphasizing every word, making them come out. "I am thankful to God," he said. "I am thankful for good health, so that I could work hard. I am thankful to my mother and father and my wonderful

A PRIVATE MATTER

family. I am thankful to Dan Walton for starting me in football.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to play for a great coach like Frank Thomas. I'm thankful for my teammates. I'm thankful for my beautiful wife and my children. I'm thankful that I could work under Red Sanders, and I'm thankful for all the great players. Not only the All-American ones like John Crow. The ordinary ones who made themselves great, too. I'm thankful to all of you."

Then he sat down, the tough guy with the wet eyes, and the applause was a great wave sweeping across that room, louder, louder, unceasing, on and on.

They beat their hands together, and they wouldn't stop, and these eyes, too, were wet. This was affection and admiration. This was to Collins Kilgore, his cousin, "his greatest hour."

And I don't think it was for football games won, and honors piled up on top of honors, and success complete. I think it was because he came from Moro Bottoms, and now for a little while he was back home again, and his heart had opened up for all of them to see. It was a private matter between Paul Bryant and the place of his birth, and it was tribute, deeply sincere, one to the other.

Arkansas applauded. The toughest guy in the world had been found out. He wasn't tough at all.



What Brick Walls Are For

24. WHAT BRICK WALLS ARE FOR

Paul Bryant knows no more technical, "inside" football than one hundred or two or three other college coaches. After all, how many ways are there to block a man, or tackle him? Bryant is intelligent, quick to react; but no dummies are head-coaching college football anywhere. What then put him on the mountain? What made him, in his time, America's greatest coach? Watch and study, look up close, and you find the answer.

MOST of the Alabama football squad was engaged this day in vigorous physical activity, except the hurt boys and one who worked all alone, off to one side of the practice field named for Frank Thomas.

That was Grady Elmore, the kickoff man. And Elmore wasn't aiming kicks at end zones, wasn't slugging the football as far as it would fly under the power he gave it.

Elmore approached the ball normally, but then things happened. One time he spun the thing to the left, another time he sent it tumbling to the right just over ten yards, and another he dribbled straight ahead.

This went on for one hour and into another, and Paul Bryant, looking down from his coaching tower, was pleased because here was a man ready for an afternoon when the hour would be late and Alabama needed an onsidess kickoff to get the ball back.

Elmore would deliver then because he had trained himself to deliver, over and over again.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

Men marveling at the football coaching success of Bryant, who know Bryant, grade him A-plus on attention to little things that become big things. "It doesn't happen by accident," he says. "Nothing happens by accident. You don't find luck in football games. You make your luck."

There is part of the secret of Paul Bryant's winning.

There are other parts more obvious and generally known. Coaching football, Bryant gets up earlier in the morning than anyone, and he goes to bed later, and he asks more of himself than he does of any other man, though he expects devoted performance from all who play for him or work with him, and he will not accept less.

His unfavorite football players are not the less gifted ones. He has no patience for the athlete, in any game, who does not give every ounce that's inside him. His admiration is attracted more by effort than by ability. The combination of the two as in a Lee Roy Jordan, a Pat Trammell, a Billy Neighbors, a Bill Battle, a Butch Wilson, a Mike Fracchia is devoutly to be sought.

All of it starts with recruiting, of course. Players are required. A man in another state told me once, when Bryant was coaching Kentucky, "We don't worry about anyone coming over here and taking away a good boy until that Bear Bryant drives up. He'll get 'em. He scares us."

Bryant will not admit that he excels in this vital phase of head-coaching operation, but he does, because he is a salesman who believes so implicitly in his product—now Alabama football taught by Paul Bryant—that no one who stops to listen is likely to doubt him. He is folksy, easy when that is required; stern when sternness is indicated; and when he credits "mamas and papas" for good things their boys have done, it doesn't come out like corn; it comes out like complete sincerity, which it is.

When he looks the mother of an 18-year-old high school star in the eye and promises her, "I'll treat him like I would want my own son treated," this is not an easy inducement to resist. Mothers have a tender tendency to look upon their 18-year-old sons who have grown up to be football stars and remember them as they were when they were very small sons and not football stars at all.

Attention to detail, willingness to work, outstanding salesmanship (recruiting, if you will) and discipline add up, but there are many football coaches who look after things closely, who labor, and who can go forth and gather material. What, then, for Bryant? What is special?

Paul Bryant wins at football and living because he is one of those men set off from the rest of us and marked "Special." Bryant is a leader, and don't read triteness there.

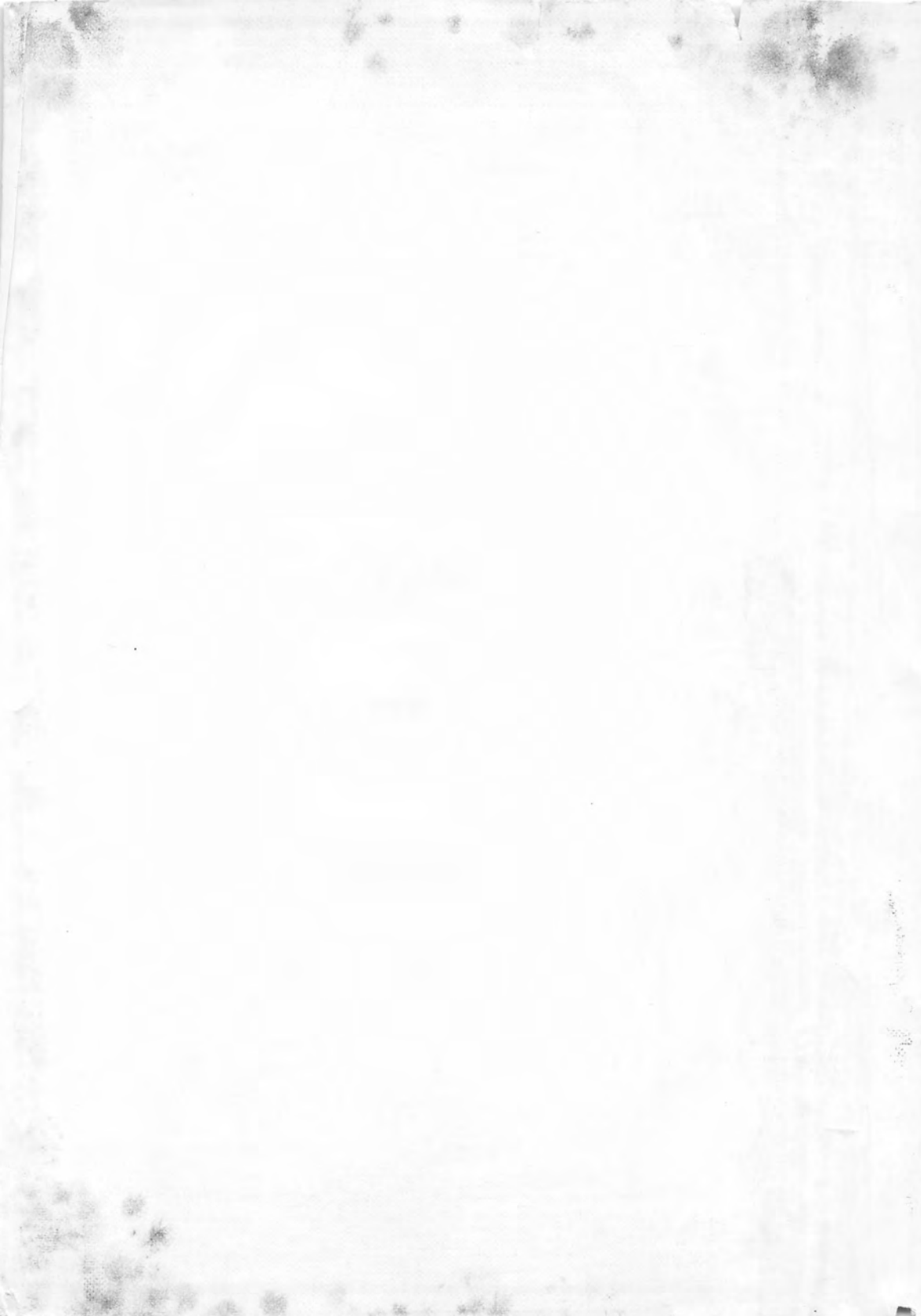
From the day he became a football coach, Bryant has owned the conviction to coach those who follow him that brick walls are not obstacles; they're put up only to be run through.

There is no great appeal to emotion on his part, no locker-room dramatics in the manner of Rockne, but the young men who have made up Paul Bryant's football teams have stormed a thousand walls because this older man asked them to do so. Most of them, they have run through because they ran harder than others.

This I have seen. This I know.

There is a glory to be won on the golden afternoons of autumn, but glory demands a price.

Paul Bryant learned long ago that paying in full is the only way. It is the lesson he taught them most of all in the best years and there, most of all, is where the years found the brilliance that leaves them glowing in the history of Bryant, in the history of Alabama Crimson Tide football.



This is no biography of a successful college football coach, a leader in U.S. athletics. Here is a searching story, and often a touching story, following Bryant from success to success, and to places where life doesn't laugh, but weeps instead. Here is why. Here is Bryant, defined.

Strong, complex, almost ridiculously sentimental, intelligent, superstitious, loyal, brave, humble, confident, demanding, moody—Paul Bryant the football coach is quite a man. Also, he is quite a story, and that story is here recorded for the first time, by the writer who knows him best.

**Jacket and Illustrations
by
Ray Brown**



PORTRAIT BY MARSHALL

How does a book get to be a book? Start by placing the country's most-talked-about football coach in close proximity to one of the country's most inquisitive sports-writing minds. Keep them close, the coach and the writer who wonders what makes famous ones click . . . one year, two, three, five, seven.

And let the question come, again and again: "Why doesn't somebody write a book about Bear Bryant?" Benny Marshall looked and listened, following on the trail the Bear blazed with Alabama Crimson Tide football from 1958, out of a wilderness of defeat. Marshall heard the question, too. Now, he has answered it.

This book on the Bear—Marshall's book—had to come not only from the practice field and the pressbox. It grew at far more telling moments—a midnight ride to Tuscaloosa, an angry answer in a courtroom, a "Well done" from the President of the United States, a boyhood memory relived, a relaxing weekend at the lake. It comes from a closeness, a friendship not often seen between coach and writer. Thus, a Bear Bryant portrait by Benny Marshall, a picture which could have been painted by no one else.

In a quarter-century of sports writing for The Birmingham Age-Herald and The Birmingham News, Marshall has earned recognition as one of the country's most gifted. An array of awards speaks loudly of that. But more prized is the esteem of his newspaper contemporaries.

What is the Marshall touch? A cohort sees him as one of a few who can "bridge the gap between playing field and grandstand, between performer and spectator, and play feelingly on the chords of these emotions." Perhaps, too, the Marshall style is flavored by the optimism of those who run and kick and pitch and catch, for he carries no knife and stokes no grudges for sake of readership. He is an unabashed partisan and all the while a keen, accurate reporter.

As sports editor of The News, Marshall is a playing manager who participates in the planning and production of each day's sports section, not content to write a column "from the bench." In such thoroughness he is much akin to the subject of his book—WENDELL GIVENS.